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ROBERT SPEAIGHT

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WALTER SHEWRING

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A Centenary Article

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CONTENTS

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER,

1944

	PAGE
The Resurrection of France	By Robert Speaight 97
The Right of Asylum in Sixteenth-Century Theory and Practice	By Dr. W. Ullmann 103
St. Bernardine of Siena	By Beatrice M. Hirsch-Reich 111
Considerations on Eric Gill	By Walter Shewring 118
The Liturgy and the People	By Dom Alphege Shebbeare, O.S.B. 133
Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1844-1944	By Vincent Turner, S.J. 144
The Enduring Element in Pope	By R. C. Churchill 160
Four Poems on Mary Magdalene	By Kathleen Raine 170

Some Recent Books 173

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON. HUMANISM AND THEOLOGY. THE LIFE OF FAITH. CHRISTIANITY IN PERIL. THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. ENGLISH PRAYER BOOKS. LA PART DU DIABLE. JAMES JOYCE. THE STYLE OF SOPHOCLES. TRISTAN UND ISOLT. THE SUBSTANCE OF POLITICS. ONE FIGHT MORE. MURDER OF A NATION.

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THE RESURRECTION OF FRANCE

AT the moment of writing these lines the end of the war in Europe is clearly in sight, and already the mood, the spiritual shape, of the new Europe is in some degree apparent. It is clear that this has been something more than a war of nations and something less than a war of pure ideas. Unanimity, and the strength of purpose which is bred from it, has existed on the negative rather than the positive front. There has been military unity in winning the war; there has been, and there still is, political dissension in planning the peace. This variety and even antagonism of purpose does no more than reflect the prevailing crisis of society. Any division of opinion is healthier than a hypocritical unity, and we should take some comfort from the honesty and heat of our debates. Nevertheless, we search continually for a common aim and an agreed method. We look for a minimum basis for reconstruction. Above all, we welcome any sign that the creative power of Europe, in any of its national manifestations, has been purified and renewed.

This is why the resurgence of France in 1944 is the most important event that has occurred in Europe since the collapse of France in 1940. It tells us something we badly wanted to know. We who measured France with the intuitions of love as well as with the inductions of logic never doubted that the verdict of 1940 would be annulled. The refusal of Frenchmen to follow the "mystique" of regeneration through defeat; the rebirth of the Republic; the effective unity of all classes and creeds against the German invader; a simultaneous quickening of social and national consciousness; the reconciliation of Christian and sceptic on the basis of an equal devotion to liberty; the recovery of self-respect—all this we have seen, and all this we had long foretold. But there were many others, like General Smuts and the British man in the street, who doubted it. They believed that France had entered the twilight of her destiny. They rated her already as a second-class Power. They spoke, with wearisome iteration, of the Big Four—the British Commonwealth, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China—as the quadrilateral cornerstone of peace. This formula is deceptive, if you apply it to the world; it is senseless if you apply it to Europe. The soft-gospellers of the new appeasement, like

Professor Carr and his colleagues, disguising their flexibility under an iron mask of Real-Politik, do not yet understand the dignity of Europe. Europe is a spiritual, cultural, historical and geographical unity, and she is not to be put up to the highest bidder. Paradoxically speaking, she is a unity, even though she is disunited, and the kernel of this unity is France. Again to speak in paradox, France herself is a unity, even though she, too, has been disunited. And so the problem of France is, in a large degree, the problem of Europe; to find a unity which will immediately transcend and ultimately eclipse her divisions. It is just because she seems to be on the way to finding this unity that her resurrection is doubly significant—firstly for herself and secondly for the rest of us. For, unless she had found a measure of effective unity, she could never have risen; and we, too, unless we can find a common basis of faith and hope and charity will sink into a twilight of impotence and cynicism immeasurably more prolonged than hers.

For the French have a power of recovery, and also a facility in decline, not equalled among other European nations. From the time of Charlemagne to the present day she has retained her rank through the most extraordinary changes of fortune. Sometimes she has stretched her energies too far; usually by confiding herself too absolutely to one man—a Louis XIV or a Napoleon. Sometimes she has dried up from within, as in the later years of the Capetian dynasty and of the Third Republic. Frequently, since the Revolution exploded into Europe, she has found her political structure inadequate for her political genius. Always, since the chilly dawn of the Enlightenment, she has been weakened by the conflict between scepticism and belief in her spiritual body. The most cohesive of European nationalities, she is at the same time a nation of individualists. This dual character is the secret of her weakness and her strength.

What, then, are the lessons to be drawn from the triumph of the French Resistance? If this meant no more than the re-assertion of democracy in the most innately democratic of European nations, it would mean a great deal. It would mean that France, after a brief and less than half-hearted experiment in authoritarian government, had decisively declared for a new democracy as opposed to a senile despotism. It would mean that a proud and injured nationalism was now at the side of the victorious Allies. It has, in fact, assisted their victory. It has meant that France, of her free will and out of her deepest suffering, has entered the political framework of the future European order; that she has taken an equal place beside the Powers by which that order will be guaranteed.

All this is much. But it might have been more than an ephemeral and political achievement, a move in the game of chess which is still being played alongside the fierce engagement of spiritual forces, and whose issue may well imperil their debate. It might have been no more than a flourish of emotional Jacobinism. But it is, evidently, much more than this. We have certainly entered in France, as elsewhere, a phase of popular justice. This may be "1848 and no mistake about it", as a prominent French spokesman has suggested. But we are a long way from the Terror and the Commune. Those who watched the news-reels of liberated Paris must have been aware that these barricades were manned by a people, spontaneous and yet highly disciplined, which had learned the lessons and not only followed the example of 1789 and its successors of immortal memory. It was Mr. Belloc who said many years ago that the French have a unique power of spontaneous organization. The effort of the Resistance has proved it. It has proved much else besides.

Many people are asking themselves the question: Does the victory of the French Resistance in the domain of politics mean the return of 1789 in the domain of ideas? The question is a vital one, and it does not admit of a simple answer. In the first place you cannot separate politics and the ideas which inform them. Certainly the Resistance sounds a note of resolute optimism; but this is more tempered with realism than the romanticism of Rousseau or the didacticism of Robespierre. If by 1789 you mean the return of political democracy, then it has literally returned with a vengeance. For the French patriots of 1944 are taking the same kind of revenge on the Frenchmen who said "Better Hitler than Léon Blum" as the men of '89 took on the Frenchmen who said "Better the bayonets of Britain and Prussia than the Red, White and Blue of the Republic." I had almost written that in each case the Frenchmen were of the same class. But that is a treacherous simplification. The truth is rather that the Revolution bred the men who betrayed, as well as the men who have redeemed, it. The pedigree of Vichy is not a noble one, even by the restricted standards of the Almanack de Gotha. Read any one of Mauriac's novels and you will recognize the class from which Vichy has sprung. Brigitte Pian in *La Pharisienne* is the very pattern of the Pétainiste *dévot*. But these people—the *bourgeoisie aristocratisante*—are the very class which the Revolution had created. It was the success of the Revolution to give property to the peasants; it was not in its power to give them a patent of interior nobility. The widespread diffusion of property has been the basis of freedom, but it has often turned

fraternity into a farce. In so far as Vichy was the apotheosis of the bourgeoisie, it was the child of the Revolution it so strenuously disowned. Indeed, in so far as the Revolution gave birth to the centralized and secularized bureaucratic states of the twentieth century, it might plausibly claim Hitler as its *enfant terrible*. But there was more to the Revolution than that—and I think that the Fourth Republic will make the distinctions clear.

It is an open question whether the Revolution did more good than harm. But there is one quite incontrovertible argument in its favour; and that is that it occurred. You can no more expunge the Revolution from the history of France than you can expunge the Reformation from the history of England. Each was a matrix, forming and conditioning the future. Nevertheless there were men of intelligence and integrity in France who believed that the Revolution could be annulled; who believed that its disorders so outweighed its benefits that only by some formal act of repudiation could sanity be restored to the French commonwealth. They believed that the principles of the Revolution were poisonous beyond cure. These were the men of the Reaction, and in 1940, thanks to the German Panzers, they had their little day. Many of these were Catholics, like Cardinal Baudrillart and Bernard Fay and Henri Massis; others, like Charles Maurras, wanted to use Catholicism without believing in it. Their outlook had always been confused, and its contradictions were never more clear than on the day of disaster when, in Maurras' words, "our ideas are likely to come into power". The gospel of the "Action Française" had been a gospel of order, yet it steadily refused the conception of abstract justice; the result was the figure of Bergson, then more than eighty years old, France's greatest living philosopher, standing in a queue to collect his Star of David—perhaps the moment of greatest shame to which the politics of France have ever fallen. The French remember moments like these, which move them to a justified fury against their defeatists. The "Action Française" was also the party of patriotism—the patriotism of "La France Seule". This patriotism was not as expansive as the patriotism of the Third Reich; but it was just as fanatical. It allowed for no other categories outside itself, and it hated the traditions of European Liberalism just as fiercely. Charles Maurras is a more intelligent man than Hitler; one might put it more accurately by saying that his mind is more intelligently deformed. He gave his pagan doctrines a Christian framework, and in doing so corrupted the minds of Catholics all the world over. The responsibility of Catholics for the rise of totalitarian, or semi-

totalitarian, regimes cannot be denied; Franco's Spain, Mussolini's Italy, Salazar's Portugal, Dollfuss' Austria, Petain's France, and the Generals' regime in Argentina are a formidable indictment. It is perfectly true that these reactions were, in some measure, provoked by the diseases of secularism. But the correctness of the diagnosis does not excuse the quackery of the cure.

The French of the Resistance refuse to turn back, although their revolt is itself a recovery of tradition. They have resumed and purified their past; they have not rejected it. Many members of the Government are Catholics, and General de Gaulle himself, whose stature in statesmanship increases every day, embodies the Christian, the military and the radical traditions of his country. While he and his followers show every sign of completing the work of the Revolution in the social sphere—by securing that the French worker shall have something of the same control over his factory as the French peasant has over his farm—they are wisely resolved on healing, so far as possible, the cleavage between State and Church. The spirit of Combes was as responsible for the defeat of France as the spirit of Maurras. The recovery, as distinct from the mere maintenance of the Faith, has come through the intellectual and the industrial classes; and in so far as these classes are now in the ascendant, the leaven of Catholicism will permeate the new structure of the State. Yves Simon, whose profound analysis of the fall of the Third Republic should be read by every student of French affairs, described the collapse of 1940 as the "defeat of Péguy". If that be true, the triumph of 1944 is his vindication. It is the spirit of Péguy, of Bernanos, of Maritain which animates, in large measure, the makers of the Fourth Republic.

We are not concerned with the personalities and parties through which the new humanism of the French may be realized. We do not deny the inevitable corruption of politics, or the disappointments that attend on human affairs. We do not wish to romanticize the robust myth of the Resistance. There is a danger in the pretensions and the power of the Communists, and in the tenacity of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, we do not believe that the stage is set for a civil war in the Spanish style. We believe that the forces of reaction are far too weak and far too discredited. There is every sign that the *épuration* upon which the French are justifiably determined will be conducted with a regard for justice and an eye for the reconciliation of all honest Frenchmen behind the Government. We do not believe that General de Gaulle will become the prisoner of the vast popular forces which have supported him, but we think that he will realize many of their ardent hopes. It is difficult to read the

tributes offered him by men like François Mauriac and Stanislas Fumet—tributes based on a personal knowledge and acquaintance—and not believe that France, like England, has found the man to lead her in her “finest hour”.

Even in this crisis of her resurrection, Paris is a quiet and eminently civilian city. The visitor does not feel that he is sitting on a volcano; the difficulties and the dangers are too apparent. The Press might be taken as an example by any Press, anywhere in the world. Behind the well-worn revolutionary slogans there is a sobriety of purpose, a clarity of vision, which robs them of an intoxicating appeal. There is the determination to prosecute the war, to recover the Empire, to rebuild the Army, to smash the Trusts. There is also a deep regard for Great Britain. The Chinese Wall which once seemed to enclose the refinements of French civilization has been broken down, and the French are eager to play their part in the restoration of Europe as well as in the occupation of Germany. They want to know about London, and the effect of the flying bombs. They want to know what is being read and thought in England; they want the normal traffic of correspondence and printed matter between the two countries to be resumed. But it is just as necessary for London, and especially Washington, to know what the French are thinking and creating for themselves. We already know that Picasso has been painting, and we may have read Mauriac's *Pharisienne* and Aragon's *Crève-Cœur*. But if London, and especially Washington, could extend their imaginations a little further they would promote, instead of hindering, the return of France into a generous communication with her Western Allies. In that event—we are tempted to say, in any event—the insulting farce of non-recognition could hardly be prolonged. Every prophecy that the opponents of General de Gaulle so freely made about him and the movements adhering to him has been falsified; it has become ridiculous to deny political sagacity to a leader who wins every diplomatic trick and unites the French people more effectively than at any time since the Revolution.

But he has an even more important claim on our gratitude, which has been the main burden of this article. He has shown to all the bewildered peoples of Europe, now awaiting release from their several nightmares, that you can have a sane nationalism, an equal justice and, one hopes, an economy controlled for the common good, without desecrating the altar and the family hearth. The Catholics—and they are numerous and well-organized—who support him have shown that there need be no conflict between the doctrines of the Church and the claims of social and political progress. Rightly understood, progress is a Christian

necessity, and the derision cast upon the mere notion of human advancement by the pessimism recently current in so many Catholic intellectual coteries might well have been spared for the apostles of reaction rather than the advocates of reform. The Catholics of the French Resistance have not ceased to preach a synthesis between Liberty and Order, Faith and Reason, Tradition and Progress. In doing so, they have not only helped to disabuse their countrymen of the delusion that democracy and Catholicism are incompatible; they have sketched out in ideal and philosophic terms, but with much practical and painful experience behind them, the whole politics of the future.

ROBERT SPEAIGHT.

THE RIGHT OF ASYLUM IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY THEORY AND PRACTICE

THE right of the mediaeval Church to grant asylum to criminals had a twofold legal basis, namely, the enactments in Justinian's *Codex** and the various pronouncements of Popes and Councils.† The latter specified, enlarged and amended Justinian's somewhat sparse, because general, rules which received their necessary amplification through authoritative ecclesiastical declarations.

Application of legal rules necessarily takes into account the political and social conditions of time and place. Now these had undergone a considerable change since the early Middle Ages when the basic legal rules were first implemented. Yet these changes, almost inevitable within the course of nearly a thousand years, failed to touch the principle fundamental to the idea of ecclesiastical asylum, the principle namely of a harmonious interplay between the functions of the Church and of the State and their respective well-defined spheres of power. Throughout the whole period of the Middle Ages the State

* See *Codex* I, 12; I, 25.

† See *Corpus Juris Canonici causa* xvii, *quaestio* 4, *passim*; X *de immunitate*, III, 49, can. 6 and 10; X *de homicidio*, V, 12, can. 1.

never attempted to encroach upon the ancient, unquestioned and well-established basic right of the Church to grant asylum to criminals. Never was any shade of doubt cast upon the soundness of this fundamental principle. The modifications merely concerned adjustments of the actual legal principles to the gradually changed and still changing social and political conditions. The great diversity of cases tried before the Courts through so many centuries brought about an interpretation that was bound to lead to more or less substantial modifications, to an elaboration and integration of the original legal enactments. These, in the course of centuries, were re-shaped through continuous application by the judiciary. Furthermore, the morality of the population, already lowered through internecine party strifes and other political quarrels, suffered a rapid decline; delinquency was at a higher rate in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than it was a mere two centuries before. It was hence only natural that the rules governing the right of sanctuary received a somewhat stricter interpretation in the sixteenth century than in those preceding it. Thus the unavoidable result was the emergence of a certain fixed set and standard of rules which were moulded through the exigencies of public order and discipline. It may not be unprofitable to outline the rules as they actually existed, were adhered to and daily applied in the sixteenth century, that is in that period which, though already showing definite signs of the ever increasing expansion of the State, is still characterized by the maintenance of a working basis and an equilibrium between Church and State. This is the period which immediately preceded the emergence of the all-powerful State denying well-established ecclesiastical rights and crushing the hitherto existing harmony and equilibrium between itself and the Church.

We select as our authorities two secular jurists, who belong to the late sixteenth century and occupied responsible and important posts. The one is an Italian, Julio Claro, who was senator in Milan, podestà in Cremona, later president of the magistracy in Milan and, shortly before his death in 1575, appointed secretary to King Phillip II. Claro knew the theory of law to no less an extent than its practical application as podestà. His literary output consists of five large tracts on all problems which the law of his time offered; his tracts are books rather than treatises. The fifth deals exclusively with penological questions.* His books acquired great reputation and authority both in Italy and abroad, and Claro came to be regarded as

* All five books are published in one folio volume, Francfort, 1590. The right of sanctuary is dealt with in *Quaestio* 30 of Book V, pp. 177 ff.

the most famous and profound legal thinker of the Italian sixteenth century. The other source of information is a Spaniard, Antonio Gomez, who was professor of laws at the University of Salamanca in the second half of the sixteenth century. His theoretical disquisitions are collected in three volumes.* Both our authors were frequently consulted in actual controversial cases, as the numerous practical examples in their books prove. Their views faithfully represent sixteenth-century theory and practice.

Independently of each other, our authors declare that the interpretation by the Courts and certain customary observances have considerably modified the original legal enactments regulating the right of sanctuary. From the purely theoretical point of view, Claro states, the right of asylum consists in the fugitive criminal's right to remain at will in the church in which he has sought sanctuary. Our author hastens to add, however, that this prohibition of a forceful removal from the church cannot be applied in the general sense, which the legal text would suggest. For, if every criminal were to be sheltered, the cause of justice would suffer, and criminals could easily escape their deserved punishment: there is hardly a street without at least one church in it. To grant this right whenever a criminal takes refuge in a church, would be against the principle and the idea underlying the right of asylum. The literal and rigid application of that theoretical right would inevitably lead to a perversion of the idea upon which that right is based. This idea is, not that churches are to be legitimate shelters for criminals or *speluncae latronum*, not that ecclesiastical authorities are to shield the criminal from the sword of justice, but that churches should provide asylum for the afflicted, that is for those who have committed a crime as the result of human frailty rather than of deliberation. Asylum should be offered only to those who are victims of their own passions and have been, so to speak, driven to crime by circumstances more or less beyond their control. In recognition of the wretchedness of human nature the Church provides asylum for those who deserve shelter. The very same view is entertained by the Spanish doctrine, as Gomez testifies.

Although it was laid down in canon law that only highwaymen, murderers who lay in wait to commit the crime, and those criminals who by night wantonly destroy seeds and plants in the fields are exempted from the privilege, judicial doctrine in

* The full title of this collection is: *Commentariorum Variarumque Resolutionum Juris Civilis, Communis et Regii Tomi Tres*, Francfort, 1572. The right of sanctuary is treated in the tract "Quando reus gaudeat immunitate ecclesiae", contained in tom. iii, cap. 10, pp. 531 ff.

Italy excludes further categories of criminals: murderers whose crimes are premeditated, adulterers and ravishers. As regards exempted criminals the practice of the Courts, Claro points out, is not yet stabilized. He quotes a decision of the senate of Milan, made on 17 May, 1567, which ordered the authorities to hand back a ravisher to the church where he was captured. But concerning the crime of sacrilege the same senate decreed on 14 November, 1560, that the perpetrators must unconditionally be handed over to the secular authority. On 8 August, 1562, deviating from the canonical regulation, this senate decided that perpetrators of wilful murders with malice aforethought cannot enjoy the privilege of ecclesiastical asylum. A similar decision was already arrived at by the senate on 26 April, 1554, against a certain Antonio del Conte, who had committed a wilful and deliberate murder, but was found taking refuge in the cell of a monk at the monastery of St. Sigismund near Cremona. Grave doubts about the exclusion of wilful murderers are expressed by our Spanish spokesman. It is true, Gomez says, that the Great Royal Chamber of Valladolid recently decreed the exclusion of all murderers who committed the crime treacherously, that is, with the deliberate intention and not in a sudden emotional outburst, but this decision can hardly be reconciled with the legal text which does not exempt murderers of any kind. Gomez adds, significantly enough, that, although *in puncto juris*, the last-mentioned opinion is certainly *verior*, judicial practice will do well to follow the generally entertained view and therefore deny deliberate murderers the right of sanctuary. Thieves are not deprived of the right of asylum, but the Spanish canonists and secular jurists decided that, irrespective of the smallness of the actual larceny, thieves are unworthy of this privilege.

It is obvious that perpetrators of crimes within the church itself do not deserve shelter. Moreover, the criminal who committed some crime in one church and flees afterwards to another church cannot claim asylum. That particular crime offended the whole of the divine institution, and consequently the criminal cannot save himself by hiding in some other church.* Asylum is also denied to that criminal who, though he had only once committed a crime in a church, later perpetrated some other common crime and then fled to another church.

The denial of asylum in the enumerated cases can be justified, Gomez declares, either by the gravity of the crime or by the dangerous character of the criminal. It is not the gravity of the

* "Cum una sit enim per totum orbem universalis ecclesia, qui facit injuriam uni particulari ecclesiae, omnes offendisse videtur." Claro, No. 15.

crime, but the dangerous character of the offender himself, which deprives him of asylum in the case of highway robbery: only that robber is denied asylum who has committed at least three robberies. For, Gomez argues, how otherwise could any justification be found for granting shelter to a ravisher whose crime is certainly graver than that of the highway robber who, after all, only committed a crime against material property? In other words, the highway robber must have proved to be a persistent offender before asylum can be denied to him. On the other hand, it is the grave character of the crime itself which prevents the granting of asylum to the criminal who wilfully destroys seeds and plants in the fields. This particular crime entails serious consequences for the whole society because it robs an as yet unknown number of individuals of food. The denial of asylum to an offender who has committed a crime within a church is based upon a combination of both points of view.

Clerical persons must not be put on a footing different from that of lay people, state both our spokesmen: if they should commit a crime and flee to a church they can rightfully claim this privilege; the implication is that they must not be delivered to the ecclesiastical judge for trial, let alone to the secular judge. Although a considerable body of lawyers held that Jews should be conceded the right of sanctuary, Claro and Gomez nevertheless declare that, because they are the avowed and most treacherous enemies of Christendom, Jews have proved themselves in the past unworthy of this privilege. Thus in the opinion of these two jurists, it would be wrong to deal with Jews in a humane way. The problem of excommunicated persons is also touched upon by Claro. He admits that, in point of law, their protection is highly controversial, but the common view is that they are not unworthy of this privilege. Claro yields to this common opinion and suggests it safe to adhere to it *propter honorem Dei*.

Only those churches are recognized as places of refuge in which the Blessed Sacrament is permanently kept. Moreover, all buildings within the radius of forty steps of a so-called Mother-Church, and thirty steps within any other church, serve as recognized localities for asylum. Although this last-mentioned canonical regulation is not generally applied, Claro points out, the senate of Milan decreed, however, that a captive who had murdered his wife and was caught in a building sixteen steps from a church could not be tried and must be handed back to the ecclesiastical authorities. There is, nevertheless, an important modification of the original canonical enactment.

The senate recognized sanctuary rights in a building near the church only when the building formed part of the church itself. Furthermore, a criminal may find refuge in a church which is only under construction, even if it is not consecrated by the bishop or used for divine service; the only necessary requirement is that the construction of this church has been authorized by the bishop. This was common view. The authorization by the bishop to destroy a church is the test whether a fugitive criminal can lawfully benefit from the asylum he seeks in it: if the church is destroyed with the express permission of the bishop, or without any hope of its re-erection, immunity cannot be granted. Churches upon which an interdict is placed are nevertheless recognized places of refuge, the reason being that, through the interdict, they do not lose the character of a place dedicated to God: it is God Himself Who bids that churches should be revered, and this reverence does not cease to be a duty through the conduct of man, however blameworthy and reprehensible it may in fact be. Private oratories, being places of worship not accessible to the general public, are not recognized as churches: criminals fleeing to a private oratory are not protected. The dedication of a private oratory depends on the will of the owner: they may fulfil the function of a church today, but may be dance halls tomorrow. The palaces of cardinals are still considered valid places of refuge.

Lastly a criminal may claim the right of asylum when he flees to a priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament. Here the root idea of the whole institution of immunity clearly emerges: for it is the actual presence of Christ which justifies immunity from prosecution, and no valid reason can be adduced to justify a distinction between the church building in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept and a priest who carries it. The clue to the understanding of this case can be found in the gospel itself, Gomez points out, referring to Matt. ix, 20, and saying that just as the woman who touched the hem of Christ's garments was healed, in the same way the criminal who flees to a priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament cannot be deprived of privileges necessarily ensuing from the presence of Our Lord. This view is commonly held, but Gomez draws our attention to the lack of a specific legal enactment on this point. He stresses the root idea of immunity by pointing out that the priest with the Blessed Sacrament in his hands appears far worthier as a place of security than the material church building: *quia est longe dignius quam ecclesia materialis*.

A criminal who does not belong to any of the exempt classes and flees into a recognized church must not be handed over

to the secular authority. Both our authors point out that food and drink must not be withheld from the fugitive criminal, nor is the secular authority entitled to occupy the entrance to the church in order to prevent the delivery of food and drink. But this regulation is set aside in some countries, Claro reports, referring to his own observations in Normandy. There, he says, it is not unusual for the secular authorities to occupy the entrance to prevent food and drink reaching the fugitive. Our Spanish witness declares that the criminal has a right not to be disturbed at night time. Spanish doctrine and practice demanded that the criminal should be in complete liberty before he takes refuge in a church. Consequently, a criminal who is merely led through a church or some other building endowed with immunity cannot claim asylum. This right is also denied to him if on his way to the scaffold he escapes his guards and flees to a priest who carries the Blessed Sacrament. The opposite view, however, is held in Italy. Claro, too, mentions the condemned criminal's escape from his escort and his flight to a priest, but he concedes immunity and seems to imply that this is the practice commonly followed in Italy. But Gomez, the Spaniard, adduces a metajuristic argument to justify the denial of sanctuary rights in this case. He says that one cannot suppose that Our Lord, being the incarnation of justice and its perfection, would encroach upon its execution by taking the condemned prisoner away.

Mention should be made of two regulations which are ignored at the end of the sixteenth century, though in force in former centuries. The first concerns the right of the Church to punish those secular officials who violated the immunity of the Church by forcefully removing the criminal; the official had to pay thirty pounds of purest silver, but, through desuetude, the Church lost this right of punishment. The second concerns the protection of the criminal who, though sheltering in a church, was handed over to the secular authority by a free-willed act of the bishop or an abbot. The provision that, in this case, the criminal must not be condemned to death or to corporal punishment is no longer adhered to.

A highly controversial point is the procedure to be adopted in the extradition of a criminal. The controversy concerned the authority in whose name the apprehension should be carried out. Is the secular judge entitled to arrest the criminal on his own account and record, or does he require the authorization of the bishop? Fifteenth-century theory maintained that the secular judge must first obtain the permission of the bishop in order to open proceedings. But sixteenth-century opinion is

almost unanimous in the rejection of this requirement. Claro points out that the clerics often proved themselves very obstinate, were slow in their decision, and not infrequently allowed the fugitive to escape. It was, he says, through these improprieties that this requirement fell into abeyance. By the end of the century the secular judge's order of arrest is considered as sufficient authorization for proceedings against the criminal. Spanish custom, however, is somewhat different. There, Gomez says, it is the customary practice that the secular judge is not allowed to proceed on his own account and responsibility, but that he has to request the ecclesiastical judge to extradite the criminal. Since Gomez does not say what action has to be taken if the ecclesiastical judge refused to comply with the secular's request we may assume that this practice worked satisfactorily.

We have attempted to sketch the main principles and rules governing the right of sanctuary as it was still recognized as valid in sixteenth-century theory and practice. The basis upon which this right rested remained firm and untouched until the end of the century. This basis was a harmonious balance between the ecclesiastical and secular domains. The balance showed itself in that the State—still being a *Respublica Christiana*—recognized and respected certain basic rights of the Church which she possesses by virtue of her unique function and mission and upon which no earthly power dared rightfully encroach. In other words, the State, as the living organism, entity and embodiment of a professedly Christian people, did not feel justified in depriving the Church of inveterate rights and privileges; the State, even if only tacitly, still recognized its own limitations. But as soon as it adopted an all-powerful and all-embracing position, extended its range of functions, went far beyond the legitimate bounds of its rightful sphere, and invaded provinces alien to its inherent idea and purpose, it necessarily came to clash with legitimate interests of the Church. This attitude of the State was bound to be more or less hostile towards the Church when the process which these aspirations of secular powers entailed reached its culminating point. The denial of the ecclesiastical right of asylum on the part of the State is of course only one of the many symptoms of the original alienation and ensuing hostility of the State towards the Church. Yet the former, by arrogating rights and functions which are not its business to possess or exercise, deprived itself of its title to the epithet Christian.

DR. W. ULLMANN.

ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA

IN HONOUR OF THE FIFTH CENTENARY OF HIS DEATH (1444-1944)

ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA died in Aquila on the 20 May, 1444, the Vigil of Ascension Day, while his brethren were chanting the Antiphon of the first Vespers: *Manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus* ("I have manifested Thy name to . . . men"). This verse perfectly expresses the guiding motive of his life and labours. The aged monk, with his lean figure and the humble, lovable face, straight nose, sharply pointed chin, ardent eyes and toothless, sensitive mouth, is often represented by famous Renaissance artists as carrying an open book with these words. More often, however, he is painted with the Holy Name, the Trigram *YHS* surrounded by twelve serpentine rays.

The Saint himself desired to die on 8 September, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, his own birthday (1380), on which day he was accepted as a novice by the Franciscans in Siena in 1402, was professed in 1403, and celebrated his first Mass in 1404.

A son of the wealthy, noble family degli *Albizzeschi*, left an orphan at an early age, he was brought up by very pious relatives, first in Massa, then in Siena. Impressive stories told by contemporary biographers bear witness to his gay and sweet temper, his attractive looks, his strict purity, his fervent veneration for the Blessed Virgin. He remained her faithful follower, preserving his virginity throughout his life, and thus belongs to the elect of the *Apocalypse* whom he exalted in various sermons. At the age of seventeen Bernardine joined the confraternity of the Madonna (*Disciplinati*). In addition to their austere flagellations practised in common in memory of Christ's suffering, the youth embarked upon severe private exercises, which he continued until his death. The widespread pest of the Jubilee year 1400 put him to the test. The brilliant youth, defying contagion, worked untiringly for four months amidst the stench and the horrors of the overcrowded hospital and also inspired twelve companions to be ready "to die for Christ". It was the first time that his power of carrying others beyond themselves became manifest. Owing to exhaustion he fell afterwards a prey to a severe fever. All these experiences inspired him with the desire to renounce the world. His first independent attempt, that of leading a hermit's life, feeding on water and herbs, "a pitfall of subtle self-love", was, however, foiled by the first mouthful of sow-thistle he failed to swallow.

In the humble habit of the Franciscans of the Strict Observance he was soon called to the particularly active life of a wandering preacher, a life which, however, drew its strength from deep contemplation.

The young friar had already acquired a profound knowledge of Holy Scripture, of Canon Law and of the Doctors of the Church, and thus had built up a solid theological foundation. Touring at first only the villages and small towns surrounding Siena, he had enlarged his circuit as early as 1410. From 1417 onwards, when he delivered the Lenten course "*De Seraphim*" in Milan, his reputation, also greatly enhanced by his prophetic gifts and miracles, was growing rapidly. He became the most celebrated preacher of the fifteenth century, whose fame was surpassed only by Savonarola's. Already in St. Bernardine and his disciples the counter-currents to the Renaissance were at work. They became the fore-runners of the Counter-Reformation. The historical setting in which he arose "like another Paul", as the celebrated humanist Aeneas Sylvius styled him, presented the preacher both with his contrast and his opportunity. An age of tremendous intensity of life, the *Quattrocento* was glorious in its wealth, in the beauty of its art, the elegance of Humanist literature, the cultus of antiquity; it was likewise appalling in its corruption. The intellectual emancipation, the epicurean love of pleasure, even the frivolity mocked at and undermined Christian piety and Christian ideals in the cultured classes. As St. Bernardine said: "The traveller on entering Italy could perceive a peculiar stench, the result of the country's shameful vices": gambling, usury, luxury and extravagance, licentiousness and sodomy demoralized whole cities, the more so because of the atmosphere of fear and hatred which the violent party strife, long since detached from the significance of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, had created. The savagery and cruelty of the *vendettas* steeped Italy in blood. All these sinful passions could be overcome only by arousing the strongest instincts in man: fear or hope. About 1400 the famous Dominican preacher St. Vincent Ferrer terrorized his audiences in Spain, France, Northern Italy, etc., by proclaiming the near approach of Antichrist and by realistically depicting both Hell and the Last Judgement. The young Bernardine, though deeply impressed, soon turned away from these apocalyptic prophecies by which one was "stuffed till getting sick". He even boldly asserted: "Antichrist will never come, unless there be a silence in our faith." To people "who no longer feared judgement and punishment" he began to preach the "eternal Gospel" or Love; instead of Antichrist he preached Jesus Christ;

and in the end he aroused the most exalted of all passion—love—by directing the people's emotion to the Holy Name.

In 1412, when brought to the point of death by an abscess in his throat, he decided upon a new and fruitful line for his whole preaching, changing both its form and content. He broke with the tradition of expounding the Gospel or Epistle appointed for the day, comparing it with the method of a pharmacist selling his powders according to the order of his vessels instead of according to the needs of his patients. In order to strike at the roots of the prevailing evils he used Holy Scripture as a whole and revived St. Francis' rule to preach on "vices and virtues, punishment and glory". St. Bernardine himself felt deep gladness at times when preaching; he found it "the very best toil he ever endured and gave up everything else for it". His only rule remained throughout "never to proffer anything but for God's glory and praise". He was the people's born preacher. Gathering ample information on the spot, he adapted his subject with unfailing intuition to the specific wants of his audience; never monotonous, he spoke with dramatic vivacity, great clarity and simplicity, and always in the vernacular. He jotted down the Sermons in Latin, but rather as a handbook for his own use. His clear elastic voice commanded all shades of expression and emotion, from sweet persuasion to threats of divine punishment. Expressive gestures, so familiar among the Italians, supported his exhortations. He loved to spice his addresses with humorous remarks; even his sarcastic or persuasive rebukes to chattering or sleeping people are given by a faithful reporter of his Sienese sermons of 1427. He enlivened the presentation with imaginative similes taken from both nature and everyday life, and he loved to insert some delightful illustrative story from his rich store of anecdotes. His eloquence, poured out from a burning heart, entranced everyone, from famous humanists to simple peasants. In order to make the effect of his exhortations lasting, the great pedagogue wanted his audiences "to carry something home in their fists" and to fix them, if possible, in the memory by notes. At any rate the immediate effect of his preaching was amazing. He irresistibly carried the crowds away to acts of penitence or enthusiasm. At the conclusion of a sermon games, magic devices, women's "finery" were often burnt in huge bonfires; long processions with candles took place. In various cities new severe statutes were issued against gambling, usury, etc. Morals were reformed; religious fervour was revived; many new convents and churches were erected; hundreds were moved to renounce the world. But above all, his successes in healing

the terrible party dissensions were little short of miraculous. The *vendettas* ceased, exiles were called back, and reconciliations were confirmed by solemn acts.

It was the devotion to the Holy Name by which the "new Evangelist" wielded his spiritual power. From the twelfth century onwards seraphic souls were transported by the contemplation of the name of Jesus to mystical contact with its Divine Bearer. (And from the depths of contemplation there flowed some currents into the channels of popular devotion.) It was St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the father of mediaeval Jesu-centric mysticism, who described in poetic language the illuminating, feeding and healing power of this Name, comparing it to "oil poured out" (Cant. i, 2). It was "sweetness in the mouth, melody in the ear, jubilant gladness in the heart". St. Francis was ecstatically entranced when naming it. St. Bonaventura and Ubertino da Casale, the leader of the Franciscan Spirituals, exalted its excellencies, the latter also unfolding the various powers of consolation, protection, support and reward afforded by it in the three stages of the spiritual life. All these ideas Bernardine's fire-like soul blended and reshaped in his fervent contemplation. He did not add many thoughts of his own. It was his particular mission to popularize them in order to make the power of Jesus Christ work once again on this earth by the means of His Name. The ardent preacher thus transplanted this devotion from the seclusion of the cloisters to the open market-place; he turned it from the privacy of individual prayer to public mass practices of unheard-of proportions; he raised it to the height of adoration and to the status of a cult. He led his audiences in extraordinary mass invocations, making the *piazze* resound with the call: Jesus, Jesus! He advocated its frequent invocation and meditation, its continuous repetition as an effective means of controlling wandering thoughts. He even suggested that the intense devotion aroused by these practices would cause its sweetness to be felt inwardly, and that it would be changed into contemplation. We have here one of the extraordinary attempts made at the close of the Middle Ages to popularize mystical methods. When leaving a place St. Bernardine bequeathed to its inhabitants the Holy Name as the most precious treasure he could give to them.

But even so, all this did not suffice to fix it in the hearts of the masses. The man of God, after pondering for four years, invented a visible sign by which the Holy Name might be imprinted indelibly on the imagination. But his peculiar abbreviation of the Name, the mere letters *jhs*, had not a strong enough appeal to the illiterate. It is the symbol as a vessel of

the supernatural which reaches the depths of the soul and rouses the imaginative powers. The aureole of twelve serpentine sunrays in the centre of which St. Bernardine placed the sacred Trigram on a blue ground was capable of evoking all those emotions connected with the vigour, light and heat of the sun. It recalled the conception of the Saviour as *light of the world, the light of life, the sun of righteousness*. [He also gave enlightening expositions of the sunrays, and of the three letters *y, h, s* associating these last with the Blessed Trinity.]

The effect of exhibiting the figure of the "sun-like" Name painted on a large tablet moved the fascinated crowds to adoration and joy. The Trigram carved or painted on churches and on public and private buildings all over Italy remained as the visible trace of St. Bernardine's propagation of the Holy Name. He was thus able to immunize, as it were, the Italian people to a certain degree against the infections of paganism. As the Emperor Constantine had triumphantly raised the monogram of Christ against the crumbling gods of Imperial Rome, so the genius of St. Bernardine held up the Trigram of Jesus (*yhs*) against the reviving paganism of the Renaissance.

When charged with idolatry in 1424, he stressed that it was not the gilded tablet and the golden letters which were the objects of worship, but the name itself which recalled the Saviour. He drew an apt parallel with the consecrated Host in which we do not adore the whiteness of the bread, but the substance of the Body of Christ. The assaults launched against this novel fashion increased in violence as St. Bernardine and his disciples spread this devotion to Sicily, Spain, France, and Silesia.

Some of their detractors may well have been prompted by jealousy; but also various learned and distinguished theologians were greatly alarmed by the danger of superstition and idolatry among ignorant people. Nor were their fears without foundation. For instance, in Mantua people added to the invocation of the Trinity "and in the name of the good Jesus"; in Sicily fanatic folk even replaced the picture of the child Jesus on St. Mary's lap by the Trigram *yhs*. Finally, in 1427, the zealous enemies of St. Bernardine moved Pope Martin V to summon the bold preacher to Rome, where they excited public opinion so violently against him that, as he later humorously remarked, the Romans wanted him "fried" or "roasted". His writings, however, when examined by a commission composed mostly of his opponents, Dominicans and Augustinians, were found to be without reproach. Further, St. John of Capistrano, a celebrated preacher, recently installed as an Inquisitor by the

Pontiff himself, hurried to his beloved master's assistance. Carrying a large tablet with the Holy Name, he kindled the enthusiasm and devotion of the Romans, and then obtained the Pope's permission to plead in favour of the defendant. In the trial St. Bernardine was cleared from all accusations and received Martin V's highest praise for his work. "A victorious triumph of the Lord Jesus was wrought by the instrument of Brother Bernardine," wrote the famous humanist, A. Traversari. His ingenious adversaries thus brought about just the opposite of what they had attempted. Both the Saint's reputation and the devotion to the Holy Name reached amazing proportions. But his enemies renewed their assaults even behind the back of the new Pope Eugenius IV. In 1431 they had him secretly charged with heresy by the Promoter of Faith in Rome. His second rehabilitation was not less glorious than the first. Finally, after their complete failure with two successive Popes, they tried in 1438 to rouse the Council of Basel against St. Bernardine and the devotion to the Holy Name. But, once again, they failed.

St. Bernardine continued to fulfil his arduous preaching mission untiringly through Northern and Central Italy. Despising all honours, he declined three bishoprics offered to him in succession. From 1433-35-36 he sought rest for body and soul after twenty-eight years' toil by seeking the solitude of the Convent La Capriola near Siena. Here he revised and completed his Latin Sermons. Four years' office as Vicar-General of the Observants (1438-42) involved a more strenuous interruption of his preaching career. The Reform and expansion of his Order and the revival of religious life among the laity were of equal importance to St. Bernardine. Each gave him an opportunity to show forth his love for God and his fellow men.

It is the secret of men of genius that their extraordinary influence, though directly experienced by their contemporaries, can be hardly conveyed to posterity. It can be measured only by their effect. A "furnace" of love does not leave anyone indifferent, but rouses either fervent love and friendship or embittered hatred and enmity. All who were acquainted with Bernardine describe his character in terms of fire; for instance, as "a coal all aglow with the divine spirit capable of kindling other, though extinct coals by the power of fire".

Love was the motive power of his life. It is love of God and one's neighbour; a love which includes the divine wrath against all vices. In deep humility he declared that he "pours out from an empty vase . . . as he does not feel the power of charity . . . the sweetness of which is transfused from within

to without". Fervent love united him with his audiences, whom he exhorted with the words of St. John: "Little children, love each other." Burning love consumed his soul like a living flame feeding on great suffering and great joy. He seems to describe himself in the merciful man "who feels the woes of all men . . . in his innermost heart . . . who weeps over the sins of all men as his own, who . . . rejoices in the good things of all . . . as his own". His strong will and great intellect were brought into complete submission to his desire for self-sacrifice; and the perfect harmony and unity of all the faculties of his soul increased his vigour, courage and endurance. His sublime simplicity made his "walking before God" straight from his youth onwards. He was endowed with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit and reaped all its fruits. His natural gaiety and brightness was transformed into that spiritual joy which St. Francis exalted as a monastic virtue. St. Bernardine's keen sense of humour was equal to every situation; his moderation and sound common sense, his foresight and circumspection solved all difficulties. In perfect self-control and patience he could retire to his cell amid the fiercest attacks of his adversaries; and he was ready to kiss the feet of his slanderers and persecutors. The fear of God, and a complete confidence in Him, annihilated all fear of man in his soul. He considered humility the foremost spiritual virtue. "Descend, descend" was the advice he invariably gave.

When he was in his early sixties, death drew inexorably near. Three times it had already passed him by: in 1400, when, as a promising youth, he aspired to a martyr's crown; in 1412, when he was seriously ill at the beginning of his success; and in 1427, when he saw the work of his life and himself threatened with ruin. These three very real mortifications were the chief crises of his life. The first gave birth to the Franciscan Friar, the second to the creative preacher, the third to the martyr for the Holy Name.

The approach of death rekindled the fire of his love and his self-sacrifice. As long as he had "the use of his tongue", he declared, "he would proclaim God's wonders to the people". It is pathetic to see the aged friar, in spite of ill-health, setting out from Siena in 1444 in order to evangelize the kingdom of Naples; as if, with a full presentiment of death, his ardent spirit craved to extend his mission still further, before death at last overtook him. In Aquila his final excruciating journey came to an end. As one of his disciples expressed it: "A great pillar of the Church had fallen, and the brightest star in Italy was extinct."

BEATRICE M. HIRSCH-REICH.

CONSIDERATIONS ON ERIC GILL

TWO new books by Eric Gill* have heartened his disciples by their mature reaffirmation of characteristic principles and their reinforcement of many familiar positions; they have also interested many who before his death knew little of him but were won to some allegiance by his *Autobiography*. At the same time they have called forth a number of criticisms—voiced in reviews of the books themselves and in general discussions of his work, in print or in conversation—which since they repeat similar criticisms in the past may be taken to spring from difficulties sincerely and widely felt. Given the importance of his teaching, these misunderstandings of it deserve attention, and I therefore propose to examine a few controverted points with such amplification or illustration as experience shows to be desirable.

There is first of all the matter of “fine arts” and common arts, or of art and the crafts. Most of our contemporaries abruptly disjoin them; Eric Gill always refused to do so, and it has sometimes been imagined that he blinded himself to a real difference between two species of things. This is certainly not the case; he often made the distinction, and in one form or another it may be found in most of his books—necessary arts, ministering formally to physical needs, and arts of “recreation” (in a strong sense of the word), ministering formally to intellectual needs. But in the first place he subordinated this distinction to the fundamental character common to all the arts (“the well-making of what needs making”, “the skill of man in doing and making”); in the second place he gave the warning that the line between art and craft, between liberal or recreative arts and servile or necessary arts, is in practice hard to draw. Does this mean that picture-painting, for instance, is obviously a “fine art” and house-painting obviously a craft, but that it is difficult to decide whether carpentry and calligraphy are “arts” or are “merely” crafts? Yes, with some reservations; but it also means more than that. It means that the necessary and the recreative, the servile and the liberal, are by no means exclusive of each other; the intellectual interacts with the physical, the spiritual is not unnecessary, and objects of household use may embody a metaphysical symbolism. And in application to concrete instances, it means that for all ages to some extent, and for ours to a great extent, a particular human work lies often outside the category conveniently assigned it—perhaps below, perhaps above.

**Last Essays* (1942): *In a Strange Land* (1944). Jonathan Cape. 5s. and 6s.

Let me example two actual works. One is a carving by Brancusi, reproduced in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* with the article "Sculpture Technique". For the modern critic, it belongs pre-eminently to the category of "fine art". It is entitled "Bird in Space", and its appraiser in the *Encyclopaedia* calls it "a simple form so subjective that it has no aesthetic meaning except to the artist". The worth of the carving is unrelated to birds or flight; it consists in the subtleties of visible shape which please us by correspondence with the symmetries of the mind and which ultimately imply (though the sculptor might not acknowledge this) a patterned, ordered and God-created universe. My second example comes from the Pacific Islands and is in the possession of Dr. Coomaraswamy.* For the modern critic, it certainly belongs to the category of "applied art"; it is a harpoon head of whalebone, completely adapted to its purpose, though making a theological point by the introduction of a little carved face to signify "Death, or God as the ender as well as the beginner of life". This carving is unquestionably a "useful" object; yet viewed as a shaped and patterned thing, it has the same subtleties, the same appeal and implications, as Brancusi's "pure sculpture". As W. R. Lethaby once remarked, "Artificer and artist seem to be two forms of the same word. One has gone up in the world, the other down. Which is which?"

To illustrate the same thesis from a somewhat different point of view—if we look at a reasonably well-made vase by a modern craftsman, then at a reasonably good Post-Impressionist painting, we may easily acknowledge the painting as of a higher order of things than the vase; if in visiting the British Museum we look first at Sung vases, then at the *Three Bodhisattvas* of the same period, the pre-eminence of the painting is still more easily acknowledged. But what if we turn our contrast to ancient vases and modern picture? The scale of comparison has ceased to be obvious, and it might indeed be maintained that everything of value which the modern painter has done has also been done by the Chinese potter. Or again, a modern small crucifix, a modern page of calligraphy, may be quite remarkably good and undeniably works of art without breaking free from a certain circumscription; but St. Cuthbert's Cross at Durham, a page of the *Codex Sinaiticus*—these are things which we are bound to view otherwise; looking at them, we think to ourselves, "After that, there is nothing more to be said."

From such examples it seems fair to conclude that while every age has its own more or less consistent scale of the arts,

* It is reproduced in Graham Carey's *Pattern* (John Steven's Pamphlets, Rhode Island, 1938).

comparison between various ages may reveal some intersection, and that this is due to the relative greatness or decadence, normality or abnormality, of the ages themselves. If one holds (and Eric Gill very strongly held it) that ours is a decadent and abnormal age, it will appear as inevitable that no art in it can reach its full scope; and it is by their scope, not by their essential nature, that traditional thought divides the higher and lower arts. Hence on the one hand we have the modern craftsman, working often most admirably but against the grain of his time, and unable to achieve in his isolation what was achieved in his own craft when it was "a thousand men thick".* And we have on the other hand the self-conscious modern painter, developing refinements of pure pattern and shape which after all seem scarcely to go beyond the best examples of ancient craftsmanship, so that one sometimes wonders whether the admitted gifts of such persons might not be better employed in following and raising the arts of common life.† And in the painter's case as against the craftsman's we may say that there is a *deliberate* limitation of scope; for one of the most evident things in the painting of great and normal ages is that it provides a direct intellectual content as well as the indirect implications of pattern which it shares with the lower degrees of art. Thus the particular greatness of the *Three Bodhisattvas* as compared with the Sung vases lies in the communication of the Buddhist idea of sanctity—a communication effected not by a catalogue title but by the painting as a whole. Again, there are Chinese paintings of musicians which imply and impart an understanding of the whole nature of music—something which simply does not enter into the paintings of recent centuries, where persons and instruments are means to the imitation of textures, to experiments with light and shade, or merely to "abstract design", according to date and fashion. It is precisely this kind of intellectual content which modern painters characteristically‡ disown in their fear of the anecdotal; and the lack of anything like it in typical works of our time is a major cause of that alienation of the common man which marks the present

* "Art must be everywhere. It cannot exist in isolation, or only one man thick. It must be a thousand men thick." (W. R. Lethaby.)

† "This is, in fact, the diagnosis of the shortcoming of all our modern individualistic art, that seven-eighths of it is the work of men who ought to be servants, and not masters; while the work of the one-eighth (if there be so large a proportion of genius) is necessarily intelligible only to a very small audience." (Coomaraswamy, *Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* (1913), p. 24.)

‡ Even today, there remain some painters who stand outside the heresy of "pure form" and who do communicate intellectual content as understood above; they therefore escape the circumscription which other painters impose on themselves, but not that imposed by the character of the age itself.

relations of art and society. For the common man, however untrained in the matter of art and however prone to equate catalogue titles with real content, is reasonable at least in his expectation that a painted picture should normally be "about something"—an expectation once satisfied in the caves of Ajanta or the Camposanto of Pisa. Baulked of it now, he comes to agree with the "artist" himself that art is an affair for a handful of exceptional persons sundered from ordinary society; and in spite of the wish of a few artists to elevate the lay mind, the wish of a few laymen that art would come down within their reach, the main antithesis grows meanwhile. Like the Stylite in Gibbon, the artist has ascended a pedestal whose height has been raised with passing years. The crowd below may be envious or indifferent; the hermit has reached his "last and lofty station", and may almost at any moment now "expire without descending".

The divorce of the fine arts from workaday life—by now an evident fact—is deplored by some, welcomed by others. To these latter—to those artists and critics and connoisseurs who hold that now for the first time art has won its true status—the position taken by Eric Gill is of course antipathetic, but should not therefore be unintelligible. That artists should actually pride themselves on isolation from the community was a thing naturally repugnant to one who remembered that every artist is also a man, and that every man in his life's work has duties to the community. The claim that fine art has beauty as its private prerogative was a patent absurdity to one who had philosophical foundations; it is easy to show that beauty inheres in anything that is what it should be; that it is to be found in the works of nature and in the truths of metaphysics (though many critics of Eric Gill have little use for either*); and that as far as the arts are concerned, it is one of a number of qualities which belong to all alike. "Every artist," says St. Bonaventure,† "intends the work made to be beautiful, useful, and lasting, and a work is prized and welcomed when it answers these three conditions"—a dictum as true of a chair as of an altarpiece. As for the actual achievement of modern painters, sculptors and architects, Eric Gill was very far from despising it. In his earlier

* In the welter of modern aesthetic schools it is difficult to generalize, but contempt of natural beauty is fashionable in places. "Real flowers!" said an eminent French engraver to an otherwise "modern" hostess. "How vulgar! I will make you some in mother-of-pearl." On the other hand, there are those who collect mineral and vegetable formations of suitably "significant form" to range with their Henry Mooses. As for metaphysics among the devotees of fine art, it is better to be silent.

† *De reductione artium.*

days particularly, he went out of his way to defend such work against misguided criticism, and to the end of his life there were individual artists for whom he reserved the warmest admiration—one may mention especially David Jones. But as he entered more deeply into the work of other times and the principles that informed it—as he studied the Middle Ages in the light of St. Thomas and the great Eastern cultures in the light of their own traditional thought—he saw with increasing clearness the difference dividing such civilizations from our own. The best minds of the modern movement did indeed attain a kind of greatness, and to compare them with mere academicians was to compare the living with the dead; but though it is much to be alive, there are after all degrees of life, and what were these modern masters to those of the past? Sienese primitives, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, the colossal Buddha and rock-cut Kapila of Anurādhapura—must we not acknowledge these things not only as greater than anything of our own age but as great in a higher mode? So too with the “new sensibilities” which modern artists so often claimed; the claim might be just in its degree, but then every age has its own sensibilities—not to speak of things which are supreme, Rajput paintings, early Japanese prints, even some Greek vases have refinements of sensibility which are manifestly denied to us, and if in works of the truly great ages such qualities may be less remarked, it is not that they are absent but that they are subordinated to spiritual depth and intellectual power.

There is a further and strangely neglected consideration which bears directly on all this matter of fine and useful arts. This is that the useful arts themselves—what in one sense of the word may be called the *common* crafts—are in fact so far from common in our industrialized world that it is rare to find any understanding of their nature and implications. There are many corollaries to this; the immediate point is that those who most emphasize the division of art and the crafts—whether popular critics or academic philosophizers—are usually ignorant of one of the two classes of things they so confidently compare. I do not complain of this ignorance in itself (it is natural in any of us today and for many reasons is hard to overcome); my complaint is that much argument on this matter—conducted not from first principles but by induction from specified instances—is stultified by the contrast of something familiar to the writer with something else which is really quite unfamiliar but is not recognized to be such. “Here is art,” says the reasoner in effect—and he quotes examples from modern painting and sculpture and architecture, perhaps from novels and music too. This is

ground he knows thoroughly; he has seen hundreds of works by Matisse and Chirico and Picasso and Epstein and Le Corbusier; he probably lives among modern artists; he has seen them at work and discussed with them; he is well acquainted with all their points of view. But he then proceeds with "Here is craft", for which he produces perhaps three instances (a table, a cup, a knife and fork), faintly praising the handmade object, then dismissing it as a thing scarcely more beautiful (if at all) than the best machine-made substitute, and in any case incommensurable with a painting or sculpture on which highly individual genius has lavished its sensibilities. Comparison in these terms is fallacious on many counts, though some of them need not concern us now (for instance, its probable disregard of household objects from China and Peru which in other circumstances might be more flatteringly appraised). The chief points are three: that it is likely the critic understands far less than he supposes of the actual examples given; that he forgets the whole multitude of crafts of which he knows nothing; and that he ignores the cumulative effect of the sum of the crafts.

I suspect the critic's understanding of even the works he chooses; this because he commonly speaks of them in words which would be as applicable to quite different things. He will talk about a table as if it were a would-be painting or sculpture, something therefore which a modern may adequately appreciate in terms of lines and masses; he prescind from its material, its making, its maker. Criticism of one thing as if it were another is usually bad criticism*; and to consider a work of art apart from its making is not to consider it as a work of art. When he praises a given picture, the critic is conscious of it as a communication of one man to other men; his words may be limited to the thing before him, but he makes his judgement not merely in the light of genuine understanding of a piece of human workmanship, but in a penumbra of general sympathy with the aims and way of life of this painter and other painters. There is little comparable in the case of the table. Carpentry may be known to the critic as a hobby practised by an acquaintance, as something once casually discussed with genteel purveyors of "arts-and-crafts"; but is it known to him, is it present to his judgement, as the work of a man's life, with traditional rules and with social implications? Probably not; hence on his part a superficial aesthetic judgement (toying, it may be, with the "pattern" of

* Some women in judging pictures appear to see the colours as those of dress materials, deploring "clashes" which do not exist in the paints as such. On the other hand, some aesthetes criticize colours in nature, supposing them to be would-be paints.

nails which ought simply never to have been used), a lack of insight which prompts him to ask why anyone achieving so little as this should care to use his hands at all. Precisely; were there in carpentry no more than the critic sees, there would be every reason for leaving it to machines.

But suppose the critic really to have an intimate knowledge of the two or three crafts referred to; there are countless others outside his province, each a possible subject for well-informed appraisal, each with its title to be considered before judgement is pronounced on the whole body of crafts. Dyeing, spinning, weaving; printing and paper-making; metalwork of all kinds; lettering in stone and paint and ink; hedging and thatching and gardening—these are a mere few of numberless crafts whose products environ us but whose nature and processes seldom awake enquiring interest. Yet every one of them has its due manner of practice, its rights and wrongs, its subtleties of achievement, its ambushes for the unwary. And ignorance of such things, however trivial in this or that example, has a cumulative effect unnoticed by its victims but acutely marked to a man like Eric Gill, possessing unusual knowledge of many crafts and analogical sympathy extending to all. When Mr. Smith the connoisseur* was displaying his private collection of Braque and Derain, it was no great matter that he should take for cotton the scarf of unpolished silk worn by his guest; we all have our blind spots. But when one must face in turn the bogus modernity of his house, the pathetic furniture (visibly wilting in framework as in fashion), the ignoble and ill-assorted rugs, the frankly vulgar tea-service—it became clear that Mr. Smith's discernment did not penetrate far even in visual things which might have been thought to be well within his scope.† Besides, it was difficult to forget that the kindly "invitation to view" had been couched in an uncouth hand under a barbarous letter-heading on meretricious paper (it was to be followed by an unbelievable Christmas card). And here were the daughters of the house, apportioning their attention between illustrated weeklies, a lush recording of harmonized folk-songs, and uncritical reminiscences of last evening's jazz; here were the children, playing with toys of revolting shape and worse material—all to the evident satisfaction of the connoisseur himself. Well—as far as kindness and family virtues went, Mr. Smith might be the salt of the earth, but it was out of the question to

* I should perhaps make it clear that what follows is a composite picture, not a particular portrait.

† A reviewer of *Last Essays* reproved its author for "his failure to distinguish between the useful and the fine arts", but praised the accompanying engravings under the designation of "woodcuts".

give the name of "culture" to an outlook and way of life where sensibility and intelligence were at one point hypertrophied and were utterly atrophied at a hundred others. Contrariwise, it was possible to recall certain other households—in Southern France, elsewhere in Europe, even in some sequestered parts of England—where there was no "fine art" about but where everything that was there was good—house, furniture, pottery; talk and music; dress and food and garden—where everything made and done was well made and well done, was one with itself and its surroundings and with a whole view of things; for a way of life so integrated, culture was not an idle word.

It should not be hard to see that understanding of any craft has in most times and places been closely linked with proximity—physical proximity to the exercise of the craft, spiritual proximity to the craftsman's aims and ideas. In the English villages and small towns of a century ago it was natural and usual to see the craftsman at work and to assimilate by direct experience the principles of his making and the qualities of its product. Every man to his trade (though trade did not mean trading*); and a hundred trades, all different but analogous, could teach one what good workmanship was, what tests would reveal slipshod and bungled work, what was meant by the maker's responsibility, what standards would be expected of oneself when one chose one's own trade. And though there are some refinements of workmanship whose perfect appraisal belongs to the workman himself and to the most enlightened patron ("Who but the Rāja and the goldsmith should know the value of the jewel?"), yet a society such as this provided at least those indispensable grounds of good judgement which so sadly are lacking now; the intelligent maker was also the intelligent user and buyer, and the general interchange fostered that sympathy which draws "the good singer to the good scribe"†. But the community of a hundred years ago was already in social decadence and was soon to decay further. The children crowding about the blacksmith then had had ancestors who had crowded about the builders, painters and glassmakers of the village church, makers whose way of making was strange enough to the nineteenth century; and the next generation might see the blacksmith go. Once begun, such disintegration spreads insensibly. The Cotswold farmer whose house was traditionally well tiled has sons who have never seen a tiler at work; for them or their sons again the old tiles are no more than a curiosity which may be

* Cf. Pepys: "At home practising to sing, which is now my great trade" (*Diary*, 12 June, 1661).

† St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I-II, 27, 3, ad. 2,

left to dilapidate or sold to a collector. What the village loses from its inheritance is something more than the visible and material; another sermon has gone with the stones, and kinship with crafts and craftsmen has faded further towards extinction.*

Our own generation has reached the last limits of remoteness from everything that is meant by the crafts. To the mass of the population village life is unknown, and if through necessity or for pleasure some numbers return to the countryside, the chances are now against their finding the vestiges of a working tradition. Few country places have kept a mason or smith, a wheelwright or carpenter; and where will one find them all together? Some purely agricultural crafts—hedging, for instance, and rick-making—are still everywhere practised, but they pass unrecognized by the townsman, who as likely as not mistakes their operations for those of nature. As for the crafts of the town, in the nature of things they still exist—in traditional or in untraditional fashion, the things we use must all be made somewhere—but who in a great town of today is likely to know the whereabouts of the silversmiths and the carpet-makers, the printers, the saddlers, the potters? Or suppose their workshops found; how could one summon courage to go inside and talk with the men, to see them using their hands and hear from the elders what changes in their manner of work had been brought by the machine? Modern customs forbid so human a proceeding; the small workshop is as a rule inaccessible, and with it a fund of knowledge which neither the studio nor the factory can supply. For those who seriously wish to understand the crafts it remains to glean what experience they can from such direct contact as it is possible to make; to approach the matter respectfully, aware that the principles which they see applied in one or two crafts have been and are applied with characteristic differences in a multitude of others; and to supplement these slender resources by studying authentic records of traditional craftsmanship in its natural environment—such things as Sturt's *Wheelwright's Shop*, Rose's *Village Carpenter*, Benfield's *Purbeck Shop*, the chapter on craftsmen in Massingham's *English Countryman* and (further afield and with ampler background), Coomaraswamy's *Indian Craftsman*, Marco Pallis' *Peaks and Lamas*, and Firth's *Art and Life in New Guinea*. Without some such preamble it is hard indeed for the great number of men today—for the intelligentsia no less than the laity—to enter far

* I find that Dr. Coomaraswamy has given a similar instance from Ceylon. "The capacity for good work in making and laying tiles is dying out, so that it is increasingly difficult to get it, and a majority of persons scarcely are aware that good work was ever done, or can recognize it when they see it." (*Medieval Sinhalese Art* (1908), p. 228.)

into the thought of Eric Gill and to reconcile as he did the notions of artist and workman, art and work.

Work—the whole doctrine of it is central to his philosophy, a stumbling-block to the doubter, a growing illumination to those who once accept it. What I have said already has touched the arts in a merely external way; I have been concerned with the spectator's point of view. But true art, in Lethaby's words, "*is the evidence of the workman's joy in his work.*" Art should be looked on not as enjoyment and luxury to the buyer, but as life and breath to the maker—and extend the idea to cover everything of quality and goodness in things made by hands, and further to beautiful care of the tilled earth." When the nature of work is misunderstood, the nature of art is also misunderstood.

"As an indispensable means towards gaining over the world that mastery which God wishes for his glory, all work has an inherent dignity and at the same time a close connection with the perfection of the person. This is the noble dignity and privilege of work, which is not in any way cheapened by the fatigue and the burden which has to be borne, as the effect of original sin, in obedience and submission to the will of God." This pronouncement of Pius XII* applies without exception to all kinds of work which it naturally falls to man to perform. To use human powers to impose order on things, to transform existing material in accordance with human will, to shape what is outside oneself to something determined by oneself—that is work, Adam's privilege, the privilege of the human person, without which the person is incomplete. To suffer fatigue in so doing, to be able to do less than one would, to feel continually the weariness of the flesh—that is Adam's curse, though it too has lost its sting through the labour of Christ in the workshop and Mary in the home.

Work, in general—the humblest as well as the highest kind—has in traditional teaching been regarded as a means to asserting human dignity and to the collaboration of man with Heaven. This is signified by Christopher Smart in his symbolism of the third pillar of knowledge for the third day of creation.

Eta with living sculpture breathes,
With verdant carvings, flow'ry wreathes
Of never-wasting bloom;
In strong relief his goodly base
All instruments of labour grace,
The trowel, spade, and loom.

*Allocution of Christmas Eve, 1942. Cf. Ecclesiasticus vii, 16: "Hate not laborious works, or husbandry ordained by the Most High."

In ancient civilizations outside our own tradition the same view of things has been explicitly held—above all in regard to agriculture, as the most fundamental and primary kind of work. Hence those solemn inaugurations of ploughing or harvesting by a traditional ruler—the most famous example comes from China, but there are others elsewhere.* In contrast with this is the opinion—characteristic of decadent civilizations and therefore of ours—that work with one's hands is a degrading necessity and that man is ennobled by its avoidance.

This hostility to the notion of work comes partly of course from softness and partly from snobbishness; it was so in ancient Greece, it is so today.† But deeper than this is a Manichaean attitude to the world, reluctance to view the physical universe as good and holy in all its parts, distrust of common things and of common men. Those who honour the man of genius at the expense of mankind may be expected to behave similarly towards material things. To certain men a mountain is venerable, but the soil is merely dirt; the sculptor's stone, the engraver's wood are materials to be respected, but not so other stone or wood. For them it is unbelievable that a lifetime may be well and happily spent in learning, in mastering and in using the qualities of these common things, in leaving on them the mark of one's own mind and will. Yet that is the privilege of the responsible workman, who knows that each thing, like each person, has its own nature, and that this nature must be "humoured, not drove". That is why things made by men's hands have the character of humanity—something otherwise unobtainable, something which, more than beauty, is the endearing property of true art.

It follows that much in men's labour which to those outside may appear monotonously repetitive is to the workman himself the continuance of an intimacy which he has no desire to break off—much like a conversation in French, uncomprehendingly overheard. Here are reflections by a quarryman on a parson's remark to a fellow-worker ("You must find it *very* monotonous

* The classic passage for China is from the *Record of Rites*. "The Son of Heaven in his own person, taking the plough in his carriage of state, leads the Three Dukes, the Nine Ministers, the great Lords and the high officers of state to plough the field of God. Three furrows the Son of Heaven turns up, five furrows the Dukes, nine furrows the ministers and lords. They return, and in the great chamber with the dukes, ministers, lords, and officers all in waiting, the goblet is lifted and the word given, 'The wine of labour.'" (Hughes' translation.) Compare the following for Ceylon: "Great chiefs were not ashamed to hold the plough in their own hands, and it was thought becoming for the young men to reap at least a part of the harvest every year; for which damascened and ivory-handled sickles were sometimes used." (Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, p. 29.)

† Physical softness may go quite well with the cult of athletics, as Socrates was aware.

work, eh?"). "Not only was the parson seeing the successful result of lifelong training, there was the knowledge of centuries behind it. The quarry itself was the planning of one man's life. Slowly yet surely he had lengthened his workings until he had surrounded an area of stone so that no other quarry should be able to cut in on it. Not one block came out of it without bringing a sense of satisfaction because it was in proper order and according to plan. Yet because a stranger saw a man punching away at a square stone for half an hour he had to suggest it was boring work. Evidently he did not know the interest in making something permanent; a stone that will go into a building and there outlast many generations can hardly be without some interest to the producer."*

Observe that the parson would have remained within his rights had he said that *he* would have found the work unbearable; and a farmer or sailor might reasonably have said the same thing, and as reasonably have been told by the quarryman that a parson's or farmer's or sailor's work would have been so to him. No one suggests that any and every man should find any and every sort of work congenial; on the contrary, every man to his trade, on the understanding that every other trade in its proper and natural conditions is fit for someone and is consonant with human dignity. But this draws implications with it. It implies in the first place every man's right to the free choice of a way of life, to the exercise of that function which he has natural ability to fulfil. This point has been urged by the present Pope, and it rests on the teaching of St. Thomas†: "The principles of government would be flouted if men were kept by their ruler from exercising their proper functions (unless, it may be, exceptionally, in temporary crisis)." But in our present society—in peace as in war—this is just the fate of masses of men; supposing them to find work at all, and supposing it to be good in itself, it is still not their own choice, and one man's work is another's drudgery.

There is a further implication. Work which in itself and in its natural conditions is good and honourable and rational may become the contrary of all this through perversion of the conditions. This may be so if some task which in a normal society would be a brief incident in a day's varied work is made by unnatural specialization to become a life's employment, which it never was meant to be. It may be so if for penal or economic reasons potentially useful labour is deliberately

* Eric Benfield, *Purbeck Shop* (1940), pp. 88-9.

† C.G., III, 71.

made useless.* And again it may be so if the nature and purpose of certain work is distorted by the use of machines.

With this mention of machines we come to the "last wave" of controversy. It is widely thought that Eric Gill was simply "against machinery", and that there the matter ends. Let me reply with one quotation. "Obviously machinery as such is consistent with Christianity, though many machines may be used for objects which are inconsistent with Christianity." That sentence from one of his earliest essays† expresses a view which he found no occasion to withdraw, though he returned to it continually with amplifications and distinctions. I will summarize the results.

Clear thought on the matter of machines requires a preliminary distinction between their invention and their use. It is as inventions that they make their most plausible appeal—as proofs of the ingenuity of the human mind; and it is commonly said that it would be foolish or sinful not to use these visible triumphs of man's peculiar faculties. But that is an illegitimate leap in argument. It is only for its speculative achievement that any invention is good in itself. When the inventor can say "The nature of physical forces being such, mathematical relations being such, these materials being such, a thing so made will act thus and thus"—he has brought an accession to human knowledge which, great or small, is independent of any practical application. But in this sense, and other things being equal, a new and more deadly poison gas is as creditable to its inventor as a new and more potently healing drug; and here the least thinking mind begins to discriminate. The principle is the same for machines. Granting them all to be more or less ingenious, it is still an open question whether a given machine is worth using, whether what it does is worth doing, whether it works more good or harm.

What then do machines do? What are they for? Some do things worth doing which otherwise could not be done at all. Such is a clock—it is not an improved sundial but something really different; and though the provision of mechanical time has had some effects of doubtful good, it would be unreasonable to deprecate the invention. Eric Gill certainly did not. Some

* "The workers from the National Workshops who were set the task of wheeling about soil on the Champ de Mars just to keep them employed, were not slow to become the rioters of June. Dostoevsky's convict, compelled to move tree trunks in the morning and in the evening put them back in their original positions, underwent the tortures of hell itself. Work of which the worker knows the futility and which deprives effort of its normal purpose is nothing more than slavery. (Borne and Henry, *A Philosophy of Work*, chap. 3.)

† "The Factory System and Christianity", *The Game*, Advent 1918.

machines, again, do things which might be done otherwise, but do them with an increase of speed which for some reason may be thought specially valuable. To this class belong, perhaps, some kinds of medical apparatus, and more obviously machines of transport. Approval of these is subject to one's considering the necessity for the speed; speed is far from a good in itself, and the exploitation of rapid travel has been principally disastrous; nevertheless one might admit exceptionally what one disapproved as a rule. With such machines Eric Gill was not particularly concerned. But there is another class of them—probably the largest—which was very much his concern: those which supplant the human hand in the making of things. Their defenders call them more perfect and more developed tools; to which he replied with an irreproachable distinction.* Tools, he said, were means of helping a man to make a thing; machines were means of making which had to be helped by the man. "If you are responsible for the form and quality of the thing made, then whatever apparatus you use is a tool rather than a machine. And as that responsibility diminishes, so the apparatus becomes more and more a machine until the point is reached when, as with the latest automatic machinery, the machinist has no responsibility whatever." To put it another way—a tool is an instrument of precision because it enables the user of it to do precisely what he intends with the particular work in hand; it serves, as his bare hands could not, his idea of the thing to be made; it can be adapted to the individuality of the material. A machine may seem an instrument of precision; it is not one, for it cannot enable its user to approach more closely his own idea; it can only force on the material a shape invented by someone else without reference to the work in hand.

Consider this in the light of an example—that of a wheelwright making felloes half a century since.† "The tools were axe and adze and sometimes hand-saw, and the implements (besides a square) a chopping-block and a felloe-horse. Yet it is vain to go into details at this point; for when the simple apparatus had all been got together, a never-ending series of variations was introduced by the material. . . . Knots here, shakes there, rind-galls, waney edges (edges with more or less of the bark in them), thicknesses, thinnesses, were for ever affording new chances or forbidding previous solutions, whereby a fresh problem confronted the workman's ingenuity every few minutes. He had no band-saw (as now) to drive, with ruthless

* Cf. *Sacred and Secular* (1940), pp. 102-6.

† George Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop* (1934), p. 45.

unintelligence, through every resistance. The timber was far from being a prey, a helpless victim, to a machine. Rather it would lend its own subtle virtues to the man who knew how to humour it. . . . At the bench you learn where a hard knot may be even helpful and a wind-shake a source of strength in a felloe. . . ." Contrast with such work as this the processes of a modern factory where the "ruthless unintelligence" of the band-saw has in fact ousted the intelligence of ten or twenty or fifty men. It is clear in the first place that the work done on the timber is not the same work. The machine does not and cannot do the work of so many wheelwrights or carpenters; it supplants them without replacing them; its products are essentially makeshifts. Secondly it is clear that the workmen at the machine are not the same kind of men as those who had used their hands and tools. The work is no longer "life and breath to the maker", the core of a human vocation sufficient to itself; the slight moral responsibility left to the machine-minder is no substitute for the full moral and full intellectual responsibility of the true workman; and if in some cases the machinist may still seem to "rejoice in his labour", this is either because of the human intercourse which accidentally accompanies it, or at best because of a schoolboy pleasure in handling big machines which rests on sheer ignorance of the scope and nature of adult human work. Who then, or what, has gained by the change? Not the timber itself, which has been clumsily maltreated. Not the user, who must accept less suitable and less lasting goods. Not the worker, whose personality has been stunted. Only the factory owner, who has lessened his costs by the degradation of men and material; and even he has not much advanced towards gaining his own soul.

What is true of this example would seem to be true of most, and the plea of Eric Gill was not for the indiscriminate abolition of machines but against their indiscriminate acceptance. Granted that certain things which are called machines have something left of the qualities of a tool; granted that a particular machine may have very special advantages to set against disadvantages; let this and let every case be considered on its merits. Is the use of this or that machine compatible with good workmanship, with the real benefit of the consumer, with the dignity and responsibility of the workman? Are the things made things worth making? What of this "labour-saving device"? The urban housewife who uses it escapes an hour of rational work, but are not the makers of it condemned to a lifetime of irrational drudgery? These are fundamental questions, and they are not answered by the comfortable assertion that "the machine has

come to stay". In a reasonable and humane society machines—and inventions generally—would not be allowed to stay if their use ran counter to the real interests of the community. And there is nothing intrinsically impossible in the control of such things. The Chinese invented gunpowder without an immediate sequel of irresponsible destruction; they invented printing but did not uproot calligraphy; they invented the tempered scale and yet retained the traditional modes. In the modern world a number of inventions have been temporarily or permanently suppressed through commercial covetousness. Is all restriction unthinkable in the cause of good work, social justice, and the dignity of the human person?

Such in brief was Eric Gill's attitude to our industrial society. Apart from misapprehensions of detail, it often evoked the general criticism that one who thus viewed the modern world was so remote from the practical and the practicable that his message could but be vain; that he himself could not possibly live in accordance with his principles; and that his greatness was after all of the kind he so often depreciated, that of a genius in the fine arts, to be remembered for certain sculptures, engravings, drawings, and for lettering in stone which was the best for centuries. To this the most general answer is that if a man is a prophet at all, he is to be judged primarily by the truth of what he says, not by the numbers of those who act upon it. He addresses himself to human beings possessed of free-will; he says: "The state of things is not as you think but is thus and thus; if you do not change, your fate will be this or that." He knows the truth and is bound to speak it; what ensues must rest with others. The city to which he speaks may perhaps repent in sackcloth and ashes; perhaps it may perish utterly; perhaps a few will escape from the burning. The prophet's greatness, the prophet's duty, remain the same. And it is important to note that though Eric Gill's ideas were counter to modern customs and assumptions, they were never counter to human nature; he did not suppose that man could be naturally perfect or that malice and original sin would somehow be outgrown. The kind of society he believed in was something that had existed historically in many times and places; and however unlikely an early return to it might be, an eventual return (with whatever modifications) was a possibility which could only be denied by those who denied free-will.

On such likelihood or unlikelihood he took different views at different times—in his last years he had little hope indeed. Meanwhile he was always eager to find a palliative for particular evils, to propose a second best, as possible here and now, though

it must be inevitably on a lower plane of things than the real best. This was in accord with his practice in the immediate work of engraving or type-designing; if a client rejected what he thought best himself, he would patiently listen to suggestions and use them if he could. They might do much less than justice to the true nature of the work, but provided they were not quite absurd, provided they left to be done something at least worth doing, he would submit to them with a cheerful resignation. In a like spirit he advocated some social measures which in a really Christian society would not be called for—workmen's ownership when there seemed little expectation of widely diffused private property, monetary reform when Christian poverty seemed too distant a goal.

Possessing such practical tolerance, he found no great difficulty about consistent living within an alien society. The first thing was to see and accept the truth; the next, if society allowed one (and it allowed him) to do one's own work in a human and responsible way; after that, to encourage others to see and work in the same manner; finally, in supplying one's needs, to rely as much as possible on those of like thinking, but where reasonable possibility failed, to look elsewhere without superstitious scruple. If one's own friends and the local small tradesmen could meet one's ordinary necessities, it would be unjust and foolish to disregard their claims. But if something one needed was to be had now only from towns, only from the big shops, only as made by machines, one saw to it that it was good of its kind and bought it without ado. "What about travelling by train?" innocent undergraduates would ask, and could scarcely believe it was not a poser.

To those who knew him, to those who followed him, the greatness of Eric Gill must be essentially different from that of those whom the world calls artists. He made indeed more things of beauty than it is often given to men to make, but to understand him one has to pass through art and beyond. When I think of Eric Gill, I think of the words of Christopher Smart: "In my nature I quested for beauty, but God, God hath sent me to sea for pearls."

WALTER SHEWRING.

THE LITURGY AND THE PEOPLE

The Walrus and the Carpenter

Were walking close at hand;

They wept like anything to see

Such quantities of sand:

"If this were only cleared away,"

They said, "it *would* be grand!"

MR. ATTWATER has headed his voluble plea for a vernacular Liturgy communicated to the DUBLIN REVIEW, April 1944, with a quotation from St. John's gospel: "*In the beginning was the Word.*" Others besides the present writer have failed to grasp the precise relevancy of this text to the theme in question. Can it, for instance, be meant to suggest at the outset that Scriptural authority is behind this recent plea? Anyhow, I hope I shall be pardoned the use I have made of some far less solemn, though perhaps equally well-known, lines which kept running in my head during my reflections on this intrusive controversy. They certainly cannot be made to prove anything; but mystically interpreted they may help to enliven, if not enlighten, the subject.

The Walrus and the Carpenter, then, may be taken for those who are agitating for the reduction of Latin in the Liturgy. If the Walrus symbolizes a certain Nordic pragmatism and coldness towards Mediterranean culture, the Carpenter may stand for those who, when the work of demolition has been accomplished, are ready and willing to build up again better than in the past; to furnish us (that is) when the sand—the Latin tongue and its music, the Gregorian chant—has been cleared away, with an English, which shall satisfy the tastes of the highly educated, while at the same time being fully comprehensible in all its shades to the meanest and least informed intelligence, and with a music which will call for no explanation, no study and no practice.

The tears are shed not for any future loss of dignity, reverence, venerability, Catholicity, hallowed association, fruitful sense of mystery and awe, other-worldliness, continuity with the past or suchlike qualities attaching to the Latin tongue and its traditional and authentic chant, but for the fact that Bill Snooks, the man in the street, isn't now, and probably never will, or possibly never can be in full mental advertence during every moment of his attendance at liturgical worship with the implication of every word and every sentence that is being read, spoken or sung in his presence.

Poor Bill Snooks! He is ignorant, and doesn't feel the absence of those intellectual and spiritual riches which he has a right to possess. The Latin is the bugbear. Little good talking to him about missing Mass. Small hope of getting him to frequent the Sacrament, listen to instruction, serve on the altar, sing in the choir, or attend parochial meetings. If he *does* perform these duties, he is simply heroic, and his heroism, alas! may break down any day. If he neglects them—well, can one be surprised? For always there is too much Latin and too much plain-song—too vast “quantities of sand”. It is Mr. Attwater who now frankly advocates the almost complete banishment of Latin from public worship in parish churches in England, and (with much consistency) that also of the Gregorian chant. This is going considerably beyond the suggestion of Fr. Gosling, whose review in the *Catholic Herald* of a book by Belloc gave rise to the prolonged controversy in that paper. But Mr. Attwater deserves gratitude for his frankness. A little more vernacular for baptisms and funerals may sound innocent enough. But will these half-measures allay reforming fever? Obviously not. Even Mr. Attwater's generous consent to leave religious communities alone to stew in their accustomed Latin juice cannot be accepted without serious misgivings. If Bill Snooks is in such a pitiable state of spiritual destitution from want of a deep and scholarly knowledge of Latin, is it not scandalous that so many of our nuns should be allowed to spend hours of their valuable time in reciting words they do not understand, despite their eloquent defence by M. Olier?

Yet the Pope has told us that the language of the Roman Church is Latin, the Gregorian her proper chant; and that the chant should be largely restored to the use of the people. Are these the judgements of one who is insufficiently *au courant* with modern requirements in the religious and social world, not particularly interested in the state of Bill Snooks's soul, and merely putting out tentative suggestions whilst awaiting fuller information? After all—the vast majority of the faithful are lay folk. And if Latin and the Gregorian chant are to be restricted to the use only of those who are in religious vows, how can they truthfully be described as the language and music proper to the Church? Shall we then tell those who have been taking the Pope's liturgical instructions seriously that their efforts have been merely a waste of time, a fundamental misconception? Should we do well to convey to the authorities that their directions have been ill-advised, have been tried and found wanting? Whereas with much more truth we might say of them almost exactly what Chesterton said of the Christian ideal: “That they

have not been tried and found wanting, but found difficult and left untried." And we might go on further to declare that when they have been tried, the results give justification for believing that, universally and competently carried out, all that can reasonably be expected of a movement of this sort—a movement of restoration and reformation—will follow. To be more precise. We all agree that liturgical life has been burning very low; that the doctrine of the mystical Body has been falling from the consciousness of the people, that individualism has ousted corporateness, that our industrialized multitudes have largely lost contact with the Church at prayer. But have not the Popes known this as well as we? And have they not taken active steps for the healing of these ills? But just as their teaching on social matters has been neglected, so also that on liturgical renewal. It is natural for the zealous and well-disposed, among whom we unhesitatingly reckon the vernacularists, to feel impatience at our dull inertia. But the danger is that such impatience will kindle revolution rather than renewal. And some of these vernacularist proposals too closely approximate to revolution. "Such quantities of sand, 'if this were only cleared away', they said, it would be grand!" But would it? There are few justifications for a revolution; an indispensable one being that there must be substantial grounds for believing that it will succeed. What grounds are there for believing that the abolition of Latin will succeed? Even if the Book of Common Prayer had a measure of success many years ago, what success is it having now? Are our vernacularists willing to take Cranmer for their patron? And if they wish for a test of their programme, how is it going to be applied? How can we be sure whether or no their programme can transform Bill Snooks into the sort of man they wish him to be except under a test of at least half a century, to put it at a very low figure?

"If seven maids with seven mops

Swept it for half a year,

Do you suppose," the Walrus said,

"That they could get it clear?"

"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,

And shed a bitter tear.

The Pope gives a programme and we hesitate to carry it out. Then we complain of its slender results, though in regard to such compliance as here and there has been given to its provisions, we may doubt if our pessimistic estimates are anything but grossly erroneous. Instead of pressing for a more wholehearted response to Papal directions, we agitate for an

upheaval as searching as the one now in question. For whatever may have been the history of the Liturgy in other periods and other countries, the use of Latin for the Western Church for more than fifteen centuries is a fact so pregnant with vital consequences that its disturbance now could hardly fail to have the effect of a violent dislocation. If in view of this venerable tradition and close entwinement with the liturgical, doctrinal, cultural and administrative functioning of the Church the Latin tongue cannot be called sacrosanct, it can fairly claim the colder but still sharply differentiating title of irreplaceable. Anyhow, the Pope calls it the language proper of the Church *tout simple*—Oriental rites notwithstanding. It is strange and sad at this moment of world crisis that considering its potent qualifications for becoming again an international tongue Catholics should so despair of its acquirement as to press for its almost complete extinction. Surely a sounder, wiser, and more hopeful course is that advocated by F. Ethelbert Cardiff in the *Tablet* for 20 May, 1944. Our Latin tongue, our ecclesiastical Latin, is a sacred trust which we ought to value, cherish, safeguard and further in every possible way. It should be made the basis of our education in all schools, elementary and secondary. This is a far more manageable and satisfactory solution of our linguistic difficulties, especially as they concern Liturgy, than the appalling attempt to find a modern phraseology that can reverently bear the weight of our liturgical needs. The Carpenter in his wiser moments may well "shed a bitter tear" as he reflects upon the task to be accomplished after the sand has been cleared away. Has our own daily vernacular ever been in a more shifting and unsettled state than it is just now? And with our contemporary musical idiom in chaos and invaded on every side by secular, lawless, destructive and immoral forces, how are we to build up a chant that can remotely express the character of those mysteries in which we believe, a chant springing from and engendering prayer, a chant that possesses any of the qualities demanded by Pius Xth—*holiness, beauty and universality*? For the eyes of the Pope and the Church which he rules are primarily set on God and His worship, and only secondarily on the natural and cultural capacities of Bill Snooks. But this order is apparently being reversed by the vernacularists whose main tenet seems to be that almost any change in our Liturgy can be justified if it only has promise of improving the intellectual advertence of Bill Snooks when he is at public prayer. Pessimistic as they are about his present condition, they seem to be unduly optimistic as to the improvements their proposed methods will effect in him. But are we to burn down the house

on a possible but quite uncertain chance of thereby cooking the dinner? Is violence the only resource for apostolic zeal? For the steps proposed by Mr. Attwater can hardly be acquitted of this charge. And it is this extreme position which is being considered here, since to deal with every one of its more moderate forms is complicating and distracting. Nor do most of their propounders furnish us with much cause for believing that the fuller and more drastic programme would meet with their disapproval.

The zeal which is vividly conscious of defects in our present-day Catholic life and burns to remove them is, in itself, admirable enough. But it can easily harden into a species of fanaticism which too readily jumps at any method that promises to effect its purposes. By all means let us deplore such want of contact with the Liturgy as we find among the faithful today. It is one symptom among many others of the damage that separation from Rome has brought upon our continent. But a vernacular Liturgy for every country—and if for England why not for every other country—would surely remove one of the strongest external signs of unity with which we are blest. And incidentally we may ask if any set of people in the world is today in the enjoyment of a vernacular couched in the current idiom of ordinary conversation? Why not then extend the vernacular process to all the Oriental rites as well as that of Rome? What a glorious prospect, for the flourishing of nationalism will then open up before our eyes! Anyhow, the magnitude of this change—if it is really necessary to give it any thought at all—certainly calls for very long, deep and detailed consideration, sufficient, perhaps, to fill one or more volumes, and to last for several decades. But is not the salvation of souls, if it can be furthered by the vernacular, justification for introducing any change into a mere book, however venerable? We seem to have heard something like this lately in regard to the bombing of Rome and the saving of human life, and to these muddle-headed questions we refuse to answer in the affirmative. The destruction of Rome would entail a loss to souls the extent of which it is impossible to estimate. To lose one's life in or through its defence would be to die in a truly Christian, not to say a martyr's, cause. Similarly we might say that to remove Latin from the Liturgy would entail a loss to the Church in her ministration to souls impossible to estimate, whilst their profit through the vernacular would be something highly dubious, and at the best a measure that could not with any assurance balance the corresponding loss. As to the urgency that only the vernacular should be heard in the public adminis-

tration of the Church—has there been much reference to it during the first fifteen centuries? For however more favourable were religious conditions to the faithful in general when Latin was commonly and widely used and when civilization rested on a Christian basis, the difficulty now receiving such unwonted attention was in existence even then. Yet it does not seem clear that the saintly and zealous apostles of those centuries themselves thought it worth worrying about. On the contrary we find, for instance, M. Olier offering a “solution of a difficulty of the heretics, who scoff at the lower classes and the holy nuns . . . chanting in Latin, as if their psalmody in a language which they do not understand were in vain. For the soul when at prayer has only to unite itself to Jesus Christ, Who is the prayer and praise of the whole Church. So much so, that the soul . . . is not without fruit . . . by such union becomes wider than the sea, wide as the soul and spirit of Jesus Christ, Who prays in the whole Church.” And St. Thomas, commenting on the passage in the Corinthians—*superficially* so favourable to the vernacularists—“If therefore the whole Church come together in one place, and all speak with tongues and there come in unlearned persons or infidels, will they not say that you are mad?” remarks: “There was a sort of madness in the primitive Church owing to the fact that they were uninstructed in ecclesiastical rites, so that they did not understand what was being done unless it was explained to them. Nowadays everyone is instructed, so that, although the whole service is in Latin, they understand quite well what is going on in the Church.”* Is not Bill Snooks mostly a product of our Catholic school education? Then if he has not been taught about what goes on in the Church, this points to defects in our educational methods which can and ought to be remedied in the future. Fr. Ethelbert Cardiff pleads for a more liturgical and less catechetical method in our schools. Quite so. And if to this we add the training in ecclesiastical Latin which he also advocates, it would seem that we are doing about as much as can reasonably be expected towards placing our children in a close and fruitful contact with the Liturgy. Such a proposition deserves every ounce of zeal which is at present being dissipated over rash schemes that threaten to upset tradition and frustrate Papal rulings. It may not appeal to the vernacularists, because the reforming fever is apt to picture the goal aimed at in a glory beside which a sober enumeration of possible improvements in accord with tradition may sound tame; and also because consciousness of past and current defects in our methods favour

* St. Thomas : *Opera*, V-VI, p. 332.

a mood of impatience and suggest a concrete panacea that promises large and quick results for small expenditure of trouble. The root difficulty with Bill Snooks surely is that which affects us all, that of perceptible contact with God Who is a Spirit. God is mysterious and so are His truths. So is the Church's presentation of those truths in her articles of faith and liturgical formularies. Hence also the air of mystery arising from that quality of sanctity which the Pope gives as specially characteristic of her music. Prayer itself, whether private or public, is mysterious and all the books and translations in the world fail to dispel its mystery. The worship of God must always demand some effort on the part of the natural man, cultured or uncultured, even if he is presented with a colloquial vernacular and blatant four-square tunes. The difficulty therefore both for Bill Snooks and for all of us lies in the Liturgy itself, and not (to any irremedial degree) in the Latin.

Guardini, in his penetrating study *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, can be quoted in support of this contention when he remarks of the individual taking part in the Liturgy that he "has to renounce his own ideas and his own way. He is obliged to subscribe to the ideas and to follow the lead of the Liturgy. To it he must surrender his independence, pray with others, and not alone; obey, instead of freely disposing of himself, and stand in the ranks, instead of moving about at his own will and pleasure. It is, furthermore, the task of the individual to apprehend clearly the ideal world of the Liturgy. He must shake off the narrow trammels of his own thought, and make his own a far more comprehensive world of ideas; he must go beyond his little personal aims and adopt the educative purpose of the great fellowship of the Liturgy. It goes without saying, therefore, that he is obliged to take part in exercises which do not respond to the particular needs of which he is conscious; that he must ask for things that do not directly concern him; espouse and plead before God causes which do not affect him personally, and which merely arise out of the needs of the community at large; he must at times—and this is inevitable in so richly developed a system of symbols, prayer and action—take part in proceedings of which he does not entirely, if at all, understand the significance." He goes on to admit: "All this is difficult for modern people who find it so hard to renounce their independence." But he is far from suggesting that we should pander to this modernity by altering the Liturgy in any way, certainly not by introducing a vernacular. In fact while dwelling with fervid eloquence upon the style of the Liturgy—"so rich and so ample an expression and one at the same time so lucid

and so universal in form, that its like has never been seen, either before or since"—he actually speaks of its force being "further intensified by the fact that the Liturgy employs a classic language, remote from everyday life". Yet it is decidedly not the view of this author that a prayer of such sublime construction is unsuited to the man in the street. After pointing out the distinction of the "spiritual life of the individual, with its purely personal bearing", and that of the Liturgy, "with its generalizing bias", he says: "They are not mutually contradictory; they should both combine in active co-operation. . . . We are not only individuals, but members of a community as well; we are not merely transitory, but something of us belongs to eternity, and the Liturgy takes these elements in us into account. In the Liturgy we pray as members of the Church; by it we rise to the sphere which transcends the individual order and is therefore accessible to people of every condition, time and place. For this order of things the style of the Liturgy—vital, clear and universally comprehensible—is the only possible one."

We find therefore that in this writer's judgement the Liturgy, whose force is "intensified by its employment of a classic language, remote from everyday life" is nevertheless "accessible to people of every condition, time and place".

Guardini faces the difficulties of the Liturgy but without suggesting for a moment any alteration. At the same time he fully allows for popular devotion which in his judgement, while taking the Liturgy for its model, should not follow it as its exclusive pattern. Perhaps we may thus express it: that he regards the Liturgy as centripetal, and popular devotion as centrifugal, and his analysis also of the vast differences, not only in station and education, but also in character and temperament of those who are called to participate in the Liturgy serves to show that a process of alteration and accommodation to real or supposed modern requirements is something far more complex than our vernacularists seem to have grasped. At the outset of his treatise, in attempting to establish the quality of the Liturgy in relation to its non-liturgical forms, he tells us: "The primary and exclusive aim of the Liturgy is not the expression of the individual's reverence and worship for God. It is not concerned with the awakening formation, and sanctification of the individual soul as such. Nor does the onus of liturgical action and prayer rest with the individual. It does not even rest with the collective groups, composed of numerous individuals, who periodically achieve a limited and intermittent unity in their capacity as the congregation of a church. The liturgical entity consists rather of the united body of the faithful

as such—the Church—a body which infinitely outnumbers the mere congregation. The Liturgy is the Church's public and lawful act of worship, and it is performed and conducted by the officials whom the Church herself has designated for the post—her priests. In the Liturgy God is to be honoured by the body of the faithful, and the latter is in its turn to derive sanctification from this act of worship." Here we have almost the exact words of the Pope.

The Liturgy is in being, a continuous reality, and from it the Faithful, whether they know much, little or no Latin, are to derive sanctification. Even the unlearned have done so in the past. Can they not do so in the future? Or is this spiritual profit so essentially a matter of intellectual appreciation, perceptible contact and vivid awareness, and are there assets so primarily and specially important in these days that the Liturgy itself, and not only its traditional language, vitally demands a process of democratization? Is this also in contemplation? For today in general we are suffering from the disappearance of the true idea of worship, and the soil is fertile for those that are false. Little has been said of the pronunciation we are to expect from our many-brogued clergy when the new vernacular—expressive, moving and fully acceptable at the same time to every grade of culture—has been decided on. Will it be even intelligible in more than ten per cent of our churches? Consider how many passages are missed even when conditions of audibility are good! But if the words are expected always to reach the farthest off, how uncomfortable for those who are near, and what a strain for the priest, especially in large churches! And this seems to show that if Bill Snooks is obliged to follow every syllable uttered by the priest, some sort of prayer-book will be almost indispensable for him. Why then disparage the English missals so rapidly coming into use, and exaggerate their insufficiency? Mr. Attwater excludes the Canon—Latin, and for the most part silent—from his reforming recommendations. But is not the Canon the very essence of the Mass? Then, if Bill Snooks is allowed to use the English missal for the Canon, why is it not sufficient for him at the *less* solemn part of the Mass? Meanwhile this agitation is likely to cause little but discouragement to those who, fired with something of the same apostolic zeal as that of the vernacularists, are yet trying to exercise it in accordance with Papal directions. If formerly they have needed support and encouragement in their none too easy undertakings, they will need them doubly now that their objective seems by implication to be regarded as hopeless of attainment, and their efforts as largely futile.

One further quotation—this time from Abbot Vonier—will help us to wind up these remarks. He writes: "Though it be a laudable thing to teach the Catholic multitudes how to enter more deeply into the mystery of the Mass through personal devotion and attention, it would, on the other hand, be a mistaken policy to exact too intense a degree of individual piety, as if the Mass were nothing else than a good occasion for self-improvement. Mass is this and more; it is a divine act done independently of the people, a proclamation of God's sovereignty, to which the multitudes of the faithful are expected to shout their approval. . . . The Christian altar is the place where God does His most independent work . . . it is a divine fire which burns in virtue of its own inner force and all that man need do is to come within the radius of the heart of that fire."

We have headed this article "The Liturgy and the People". Ought it to be "The People and the Liturgy"? Ought we, in fine, whilst availing ourselves to the full of every reasonable improvement in teaching and organization that can be advanced, to aim at raising the people to the mind of the Liturgy? Or ought we, despite imminent risks of departure from reverence, dignity, beauty, Catholicity and tradition, to aim at bringing the Liturgy down to the mind of the people? The Popes seem to have favoured the former aim.

DOM ALPHEGE SHEBBEARE, O.S.B.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, 1844-1944

HOWEVER much we may have come to appreciate that in habit of mind Gerard Manley Hopkins was a Victorian, his centenary almost inevitably startles us. After all, knowledge of him is barely twenty years old. In his lifetime his extraordinary endowment was known to very few, and to none in all its rich diversity. He died in 1889 and there was silence; or nearly so. In 1893, and 1895 his devoted friend, Robert Bridges, published

a few poems in anthologies; but it was not until the success of *The Spirit of Man*, in 1915, that he judged the time ripe for an edition. This edition of 750 copies (of which 50 were given away) came out in 1918; it was well received but not exhausted till 1928. It is only from the date of the second edition (1930) that Hopkins's poetry has come to be widely known.

Poetry such as this, revealing so forged a feature and so abrupt a self, was bound to provoke questions about its author. What manner of man was he? Dr. Bridges had written a short memoir to introduce eleven poems in 1893; there were three articles from Fr. Joseph Keating, S.J., in 1909; Fr. Lahey published a short *Life* in 1930. But to know Gerard Hopkins in his uniqueness, to feel the texture of his personality and his rare qualities of mind and spirit, we had to wait for Professor Abbott's three volumes of correspondence (1935 and 1938) and for Mr. Humphry House's publication of the *Note-books and Papers* in 1937. Almost before these could be assimilated, the present war was upon us; and when, in 1942, an American, Dr. John Pick, of Boston, marshalled the evidence of the documents and published his *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Priest and Poet*, his work was too often greeted with angry noises and explosive fury.

Meanwhile essays and studies on the poetry of Hopkins had multiplied, and many of these are gems of sensitive criticism and are of abiding value. These studies range from the fine analytical work of Miss Sitwell and Dr. Leavis and Dr. W. H. Gardner to the enchanting vagaries of Dr. Richards and Mr. William Empson and Mr. Herbert Read. But admirable, and more, as many of these studies are, and invaluable as is their aid to the appreciation of what a poem of Hopkins is, it is surely not churlish to confess (indeed, it is merely to accept their self-imposed limitations) that as accounts of Hopkins's poetry they are but partial accounts and miss somehow the very "throng and stack of being" that it is.

"Somehow"—but how? We are confronted at once with a set of grave and ramifying preoccupations of contemporary criticism, both in literature and in the other arts; preoccupations, moreover, that tend to weaken an adequate response to poetry such as that of Hopkins, and indeed all too readily stiffen into critical dogmas and inhibit such a response altogether. This is not the place to discuss these preoccupations, for they are complex and cannot be dealt with summarily; it must suffice to indicate what they are and to illustrate their relevance to the criticism of a Jesuit priest's poetic achievement.

The Wreck of the Deutschland, writes one of the finest of Hopkins's critics, Dr. W. H. Gardner, is a remarkable illustration

of "the truth of the statement that it is not what a poem *says* that matters, but what it *is*".* It is a statement that has become a commonplace of criticism of the visual arts (even though without qualification it remains a half-truth) and of late is increasingly *applied*, as a principle of criticism, to literature. But its truth surely depends on the way in which it is used, or on the context in which the statement is made. That the subject does not make a work of art is a truism not worth repeating; that there is no direct proportion between the subject and the excellence of the art is another truism that can be left unsaid. But that subject does not matter at all but is irrelevant to the work of art and to the response which the work elicits is a proposition whose falsity can be detected at least from its consequences, if not also from its presuppositions. What these are we shall glance at shortly; meanwhile let me illustrate what comes of multiplied and unqualified half-truths from a centenary article in the *Spectator* of July 14. "From the point of view of literary criticism," writes Mr. W. J. Turner, "it is more pertinent to say that no man can escape from his own nature whatever religion he takes to as a refuge, and no matter to whom he turns for help. . . ." Intense sensuous vitality is the elemental motive force behind all Hopkins's finest poems (their successful literary expression is due to the literary cast of Hopkins's intellect, which was very marked), and this remains the same no matter whether the language is that of Mariolatry or of a Hymn to Diana. Whether there is any peculiar virtue in the subject-matter itself—of poetry or of any other art—is another question, and one which no philosopher or critical writer on aesthetics has as yet ever been able to answer satisfactorily." Here preoccupations have already fossilized into principles and conspire to insulate the critic pretty effectively.

But we have here a clue, I think, to the reason why not a little excellent criticism of Hopkins seems to miss the "instress and inscape" of the poems. If in the visual arts subject-matter is quite irrelevant (and by "subject-matter", an ambiguous word, is here understood what the subject signifies for the artist in his ordinary intellectual and emotional experience), then we seem committed to the whole ideology of abstract art, and in particular to this, that response to a work of art is entirely an aesthetic response unrelated to any other activities or affections of the man who so responds. But so to divorce art from life, from other human interests and responses (not excluding moral responses), is really to make of it "a mere matter of catering for highly specialized connoisseurship, for a kind of visual gour-

* *Essays and Studies*, Vol. xxi (1936), p. 126.

mandism",* and, as Geoffrey Scott pointed out long ago, it is to make it impossible to account for that difference between great art and good art that we are in fact well aware of. Indeed, abstractionism neither explains nor educates aesthetic responses, but dragoons them and has them goose-stepping to a theory.

If in the visual arts it is fallacious to declare that subject-matter is quite irrelevant, *a fortiori* is it (one would think) in literature. A poem is not just a system of sounds, say, but is made of words, and words signify. Or are we to follow the Abbé Bremond and say that to the experiencing of Virgil it matters little whether you understand him or not? But, willy-nilly, when a man reads a poem in a language he knows, he attends to what is being said—that is, to what the writer means, and only by a feat of acrobatics can he indulge a literary gourmandism in what the poem is, regardless of what it is about. In fact, the feat is probably impossible. As Mr. T. S. Eliot puts it from a slightly different point of view, however much we may read literature for aesthetic enjoyment, the reading "never affects simply a sort of special sense: it affects us as entire human beings; it affects our moral and religious interests".

The distinction, then, between what a piece of literature is and what it is about is a difficult one, and one that cannot significantly be made without first making clear precisely how one intends to use it. But if subject-matter—that is, what the subject means to the writer in his ordinary intellectual and emotional experience—is relevant to what a poem is and must itself, in one way or another, be responded to, then criticism of Hopkins begins to find itself in an impasse. At any rate, there is a dragon in the way, a hydra difficult to circumvent and impossible to kill.

For what are these poems about and what is the experience they communicate? And what is the poet counting on—what does he presuppose in us if from us is to be elicited a total response similar in quality to his own experience and emotion? And if what he is counting on is not there, and we cannot understand what he is at, or are affected by what he says in a fashion quite different from that in which he is himself affected; if the central line of communication is cut, can we really have the proper aesthetic enjoyment of all those grandeurs and subtleties of form and texture that are modes of expressing we know not what? But surely, one might say, there is no mystery here and no occasion for fuss. What these poems are about is pretty clear: Hopkins may be difficult, but he is never vague; his obscure passages are almost always "the midnight that is charged with

* John Rothenstein, *British Artists and the War* (1931), p. 13.

the mysteries of veiled luminaries and budding morrows". Yet some element of distortion has intruded itself between reader and poet when at this date a critic like Mr. W. J. Turner, whom I will quote again because he is characteristic of a contemporary critical style, can write that "Hopkins's poetry, fine as it is, remains, in a sense, minor poetry. His range is very limited. His work has no philosophical or intellectual content; it is purely physical and verbal.* He remains always on the sensuous surface of things. Nor is he a profound imaginative poet as Wordsworth is. He never conveys any sense of the mystery in things. Perhaps as a Roman Catholic he was inhibited from conceiving of any since the whole truth had, once for all, been revealed to mankind. Yet Dante in the *Paradiso* is creative on the grand scale, but I suspect that to Dante his religion was something added to him, on the principle that he who has much shall have more, whereas with Hopkins was it possibly a case of he who has little shall lose even the little that he hath?" What is it that is distorting the view?

If subject-matter counts in literature, and if to respond adequately to a poem you must to some extent know what the poet is talking about, it would seem to follow that in certain circumstances it is impossible to respond adequately to certain poets. This is the dragon. The differences of intellectual and emotional habits of mind between poet and audience may be so extreme that the audience just does not know what the poet is saying, or (but this is only to put it in another way) marks a theme but spontaneously feels about it quite differently from the way in which the author feels; so that the minimum of common belief and feeling that a poet must inevitably presuppose is completely to seek. If a man, for instance, is so habituated that all love between the sexes is nothing but more or less disguised physical appetite, then Donne's love poems, the earlier no less than the later, are surely a closed book to him; and if Donne cannot "get across" what he has in mind, then there can be no aesthetic delight in his mode of expressing it. Now Gerard Manley Hopkins is a religious poet, and a religious poet of a special kind; but many of his readers are not religious men, or are religious men of quite a different kind. But can a poet whose subject-matter is controlled and informed and inspired by a certain set of religious beliefs communicate what he has in mind to a reader to whom those beliefs are moonshine or (and this is really more important) who not only disbelieves them but is so far estranged from their atmosphere that he does not know what

* Cp. Mr. Geoffrey Faber's judgement of Newman's *Essay on Development*: "a piece of magnificent rhetoric".

it would feel like to believe them? It is a question that critics discuss—though perhaps they rarely face it in its bleakness—and some, like the critic I have been quoting, implicitly suppose that it is a sham question. On the whole, they incline to say that in these circumstances communication does not present much difficulty, granted a good measure of sympathy and “a willing suspension of disbelief”. For reasons that have been hinted at, it is not, I think, a satisfactory answer; but in some instances it is at the present moment a plausible one. It is plausible to argue that an unbeliever, and even (perhaps) a man who cannot imagine what it would feel like to believe, could divine what Crashaw was at, or Herbert or Vaughan; at any rate, these poets would probably not shock him. For their poetry can be construed (not that it is rightly construed) as religious poetry in the sense of a distillation of the aspiring spirit of man; and in a time when Christianity is conceived and felt as a sort of disincarnate spiritual essence such a construction will escape a reader's own notice: indeed, it is the spectacles through which he sees.

But the religion of Hopkins's verse stubbornly and obtrusively resists such a construction: it cannot be imperceptibly liberalized. It is not a religion of the spirit, but historical and dogmatic and institutional Christianity. If anything, it is conflict with the spirit of man:

That night, that year
Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my God!) my God.

As Mr. Gardner has written, Hopkins “may almost be said to struggle with the Holy Ghost as with an incubus: the pangs of surrender are physical no less than spiritual; his midriff is astrain, his whole being laced with the terrific ‘stress’ of Pentecostal fire”. Compared with Hopkins, John Donne, even, is almost languid.

Inspired as it is by dogmatic beliefs that have entered into the very texture of his mind and give their “selfbeing” to his feelings, there is something, I think, in Hopkins's poetry that is outside the compass of many a reader's apprehension and sensibility; and there is much that baffles and shocks and alienates. There was a great deal that alienated Bridges. This is an honest reaction, with which one has great sympathy; however much he regretted Hopkins's theology, he never pretended that it was not really there. It is possible, too, and not unreasonable, to turn a blind eye to the disconcerting in a poet whom otherwise one admires and loves, and in the beginning it was easily possible. Many

poems are masterpieces of nature-poetry in which theology is "unobtrusive", and to a lover of great verse the impact of Hopkins is terrific: the fierce strength and packed beauty and the stress of him take a reader captive, and in the 'twenties his novelities of rhythm and diction and form were overwhelming. He seemed, indeed, to be a very modern poet. But this phase now belongs to yesterday. Today much criticism of him appears to be coloured by one or other answer to the "problem" of Hopkins the poet and Hopkins the devoted Jesuit priest. How has this come about?

His verse, even in its darkest passages, is not obscure from fumbling or faltering. It is, moreover, successful artistic work, a substantial thing with its own being, to the experience and comprehension of which information about its author is, strictly speaking, either a luxury or an irrelevance. None the less, there is a sense in which it belongs to a culture remote from our contemporary world; it may call, therefore, for a measure of explanation. It is a habit of the mind, to which sufficient attention is rarely paid, to perceive and experience through its own dominant patterns, to interpret the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar, and this quite subconsciously; we tend to think that a proposition, say, means what we should have meant by it had we uttered it, and we may be pulled up sharp by the discovery, out of a man's biography or letters, that for him it meant something rather different or had a different emotional aura. Even for the literary criticism of Milton it may be necessary to have a *Preface to Paradise Lost*, and for the literary criticism of Hopkins it may be necessary to have his letters and the note-books.

It is not that they throw new light on the subject-matter of his verse; but they force it even more closely on our attention. They revealed a man who was all of a piece: his own unique signature is written over everything that he thought or said or did. And it emerged very clearly that if any man ever gave himself wholeheartedly and without reserves to the life that he had chosen it was Fr. Hopkins. But the life that he had chosen was that of a Roman Catholic priest and Jesuit—and this (be it observed) is a life and not a profession: it was not for him a job for certain working hours of the day, but a life lived with his entire self and all the astonishing endowment of his natural faculties. In all his poetic work, it appeared more and more vividly the more these letters and note-books were read, there was unity of pattern and of inspiration, and the essence of this unity lay in his spiritual and intellectual and emotional life as a Jesuit priest. In 1942 Dr. John Pick conveniently collected all the relevant material and let the facts speak for themselves.

The reception given to his book by several critics of standing was astonishing. However "abstractionist" a man may be in his aesthetics, when he is not theorizing he does, I think, want to understand what it is that a writer is saying, to get into his mind and, if possible, to feel with him; and this, after all, is but the sympathy correlative to the suspension of disbelief, the sympathy without which a poem (and any work of art) is but a mere occasion for the release of an "aesthetic emotion" with which it may have nothing whatever to do. To have this understanding and sympathy may be an impossible feat; but the feat is one that any man, it is natural to think, will want to attempt, and will therefore be grateful for and attentive to whatever is calculated to be of assistance and to throw light on unfamiliar places. Instead, Pick's essay provoked outbursts of intransigent denials that the facts were like that at all (a most unscholarly spectacle), and the very critics who aver that "from the point of view of literary criticism" it simply does not matter whether Hopkins the poet is on speaking terms with Hopkins the Jesuit priest insisted very vehemently (but most irrelevantly) that we must not be bounced into thinking that they were in fact on terms of amity. It was an astonishing reception, and all the more so in that some critics like Mr. G. W. Stonier (in the *New Statesman*) had earlier shown that they knew better.

What is the explanation of this strange state of affairs? I do not know, unless it be an inability to understand how a man whose mind and personality bears every stamp of genius can really live a Catholic spiritual life without division or impoverishment, or really think that he finds his genuine fulfilment, if not also his "peace", in the Society of Jesus. But we are here far from the purity of literary criticism. Nevertheless, since the alleged radical discordance between poet and priest in Hopkins remains to nag the mind and to interfere with the responses to his verse that Hopkins himself was counting on, it may not be amiss in the rest of this article to attempt some brief discussion of this supposed disharmony. This is not literary criticism, nor is it immediately prefatory to it; but, as the critics in spite of themselves bear witness, it is not unrelated to it. And indeed there is a grave disquiet in Hopkins's character, which appears in his letters, though not in his poetry, and it is as well to give it its proper location.

It seems absurd, Mr. Stonier once wrote, "to speak of damage done to him by conflicts of art and religion, sensuousness and asceticism". It does. Yet there are many who are bothered, and with reason, by what the letters have revealed, an apparent undercurrent of anxiety in Hopkins lest after all his love of and

admiration for human beauty be only by a self-deception on his part assumed into his love and praise of God; they are bothered because they do not find the same kind of anxiety about his response to non-human beauty. We must not exaggerate here, but passages of letters come to mind. He wrote to Baillie: "You know I once wanted to be a painter. But even if I could I wd. not I think, now, for the fact is that the higher and more attractive parts of the art put a strain upon the passions which I shd. think it unsafe to encounter." But this passage he wrote on February 12, 1868, about seven months before he entered the Jesuit noviciate and hardly eighteen months after he had become a Catholic; at a time, therefore, when in his devotional and ascetical outlook he was still close to Liddon and to Pusey and not at all affected by "Jesuit spirituality". The note-books and letters remind us of what the deferred publication of his work and his recent fame make us forget, that he was indeed born a hundred years ago and grew up and lived in Victorian England. But more particularly do they remind us that the religious Oxford in which he grew to manhood was amongst other things an atmosphere charged with the spirit of the great Tractarians. Of this spirit one component was a stern, unbending ascetism of a type whose flavour is caught in Pusey's resolution, sanctioned by Keble, "to drink cold water at dinner as only fit to be where there is not a drop 'to cool this flame'"; an asceticism, moreover, whose accompaniment would seem to be an "either-or" type of spiritual and devotional outlook (there are examples of it throughout Newman), in which the first and quasi-instinctive reaction to "creatures" is that they are competitors with God in a world where the only realities that count are the transcendent God and the individual soul.

Be shelléd, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

This is Hopkins in his pre-Jesuit days.

Dispositions formed in a man's university years usually linger for long, and sometimes for ever. But reflection on the philosophy and theology that he was taught, on Duns Scotus, on the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, allayed in Hopkins this fear of the senses and released all the glory of his "nature-poetry". None the less, in a letter to Bridges in 1879, he wrote: "I think then no one can admire beauty of the body more than I do, and it is of course a comfort to find beauty in a friend or

a friend in beauty. But this kind of beauty is dangerous." Dangerous? Does the word still betray an "unresolved tension"? Hopkins firmly believed two things: that any creature is genuinely most loved and admired when it is loved and admired as the "image" of God and "for the sake of" God, and that to love something as the "image" of God and "for His sake" is genuinely to love *it* for what it is in itself and is not to use it as a means for the release of the love of God. But he knew that though ideally love for a creature (human beauty, say) and love of God are not competitive loves, yet self-deception is possible and that in human love, for instance, there *may* be a siren-voice that beguiles a man into such an absorbed predilection and choice of it for its *exclusive* self as is incompatible with God's will as otherwise known. Hence, as he says, such love is "dangerous". This is plain sense. Perhaps indeed, Victorian as he was, he was timid—but who shall judge? And in any case this is a matter not of principle but of emphasis.* On the positive side, we may transpose here what Hopkins wrote in his Comments on the *Spiritual Exercises* concerning grace: so far as grace "is looked at *in esse quieto* it is Christ in his member on the one side, his member in Christ on the other. It is as if a man said: That is Christ playing at me and me playing at Christ, only that it is no play but truth; That is Christ *being me* and me being Christ."

I say more: the just man justices;

Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces:

Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—

Christ—for Christ plays in ten thousand places,

Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his

To the Father through the features of men's faces.

So far as his sensibility is concerned, then, Hopkins's experience as a Jesuit both released his poetic endowment and kindled it to fresh fire. As for his intelligence, his professional studies opened to him rare pastures to feed in and a whole universe of discourse to bite on, and leisure to bite on it. But who runs may read, and if any be tempted to think of a mind in chains or dulled by repression let them reflect on his account of personality in the Comments on the *Spiritual Exercises*,† a superb specimen of analysis. Nor were his interests narrowed or confined. His

* It is astonishing that, unless my memory tricks me, one of the finest of Hopkins's scholars has, in unpublished MSS. and in conversation, thought it necessary to bring "homosexuality" into his explanation of Hopkins's mind on this matter. This seems to me to be blunting Occam's razor and to find no support in the evidence.

† Humphry House, *Note-books and Papers*, pp. 322-8.

output of literary criticism is considerable, and towards the end of his life there is his growing interest in music ("I am at work on a great choral fugue! I can hardly believe it"—in December, 1887),* and his strange but exhilarating excursions into Egyptology. Even the frightful routine of teaching in Dublin was no bar to his ranging wide into Greek metric or the structure of Greek choral odes.

No doubt, of course, it may be thought that the "hard discipline" of the Society of Jesus will inevitably crush or mangle the flowering of a genius so rare and intense and individual and sensitive as his; it may even be thought that no religious order or closely organized celibate body of men is a proper *milieu* for the development of anyone so extraordinarily endowed by nature. But behind this thought there lurks, I think, the belief that genius is inevitably a sensitive plant that cannot flourish except in very specially prepared soil, and even that a poet ought to be so sheltered that he is free simply to write. Remy de Gourmont praised Flaubert as the very exemplar of the creative writer because he devoted his entire self to his craft and refused to be distracted by the mere business of living. But so far was Gerard Hopkins from believing this that he thought that other things were more important than poetry—and so he became a Jesuit. And it never crossed his mind to doubt this even when, on the missions, he sighed for leisure to write.

But in fact the answer to all these wonderings is surprisingly simple. One might think, for instance, in consequence of them, that in his Jesuit *milieu* Hopkins must have felt terribly alone and apart and unhappy, though of course one might well go on to add that a man such as he would have felt like this anywhere. Did he not, after all, pour out his soul in letters? (But can we imagine him flourishing in the household of his dear Bridges?) Yet in truth during the years when he was most closely subjected to Jesuit discipline, up to his ordination and a little beyond, there is no indication anywhere that that was what he felt. His was indeed, as all the evidence goes to show, a very robust soul, and one too keenly interested in other people and things ever to shiver in an isolation of the common sort. His letters during all this period are wide-eyed and breezy, and these years are his most prolific years as a poet. To this time belongs his "nature-

* I think there is much to be said for Prof. Abbott's suggestion that in these years he was turning from poetry to music and that "music would have absorbed him had he lived". Lord David Cecil has suggested that several passages in his poetry appear to start from an experience shaped not verbally but musically, and it may well be that he had reached a stage (as Mr. Eliot perhaps has) when what he had it in him to say could no longer be adequately said in verse.

poetry", poems like *Pied Beauty*, *The Starlight Night*, *God's Grandeur*, *The Caged Skylark*, *The Windhover*, in which his eyes are no longer "shelléd" but open to praise and reverence God in the vividly observed particularities of creation. There is no unresolved tension here; yet its very absence appears to mislead many of his critics. Where Hopkins in one single vision sees "the own scape" of natural beauties proclaiming the glory of God and sings of it (therefore) for what it is in itself, they miss this centralizing insight of his and think that these poems bear witness merely to the poet's amazing sensuous awareness—an awareness externally related to the praise of God by a species of dutiful afterthought. It is odd to watch the burden of a Jesuit's poetry being misheard through the puritanism of his readers.

But this season of "rustling calm and tendrilous poetic apprehension" was not to last. Behind the great last sonnets (four of which "came like inspirations unbidden and against my will") lay months and years of terrible suffering and torment. The sonnets are lucid—terrifyingly so; but besides this Hopkins has on not a few occasions revealed both the depth and the nature of this appalling suffering in letters. But a strange reluctance to accept his own account of himself has kicked up a dust and called it an undisclosed tragedy, and once again an irritated pity at the crucifixion of a genius (a pity that Hopkins himself would have despised) has intruded itself between a poet and his audience.

To what Hopkins himself has said of these years there is really little to add. None the less, it has not been sufficiently remarked, I think, that it is precisely the very quality that is the essence of his genius which is perhaps the main contributory factor to the agony of his last years. Take a passage from his *Journal*, of July 20, 1868.

"Walked down to the Rhone glacier. It has three stages—first a smoothly moulded bed in a pan or theatre of thorny peaks, swells of ice rising through the snow-sheet and the snow itself tossing and fretting into the sides of the rock walls in spray-like points: this is the first stage of the glaciers generally; it is like bright-plucked water swaying in a pail; second, after a slope nearly covered with landslips of moraine, was a ruck of horned waves steep and narrow in the gut: now in the upper Grindelwald glacier between the bed or highest stage was a descending limb which was like the rude and knotty bossings of a strombus shell; third the foot, a broad limb opening out and reaching the plain, shaped like the fan-fin of a dolphin or a great bivalve shell turned on its face, the flutings in either case being suggested by the crevasses and the ribs by the risings between them, these being swerved and inscaped strictly to the motion of the mass. Or you may compare the three stages to the heel, instep, and ball or toes of a foot. The second stage looked at from nearer appeared like a box of plaster of Paris or starch or tooth-powder, a little moist, tilted up and then struck and jarred so that the powder broke and tumbled in shapes and rifts."

I have quoted this early passage in full (it could be abundantly paralleled), because it exemplifies a character of Hopkins's observation so radical that it is also a character of his personality. You have a description that is unstrained indeed but is in its every phrase endeavouring to grasp and state the "thisness" of a particular scene (Hopkins knew what *ecceitas* was before he read Duns Scotus); unstrained, it is "stressed" and "strung", and comes of an intense concentration of awareness. Compare with it a passage written some twelve years later: "Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own." You have here a mind that can take no refuge in the general, but is taut all the time to the fresh, unstaled experience of what things are in the impact of their individual self-hoods. Nothing is thought or felt at second-hand; and he no more grows into conventions that shield the mind any more than into visual commonplaces that film the senses. This is the mainspring of his poetic genius (as also of much of his criticism); it is the reason, too, why his verse is so tightly packed with strength upon strength that the reader is inclined to cry "Mercy" and to ask for breathing-space in a relaxed line. It is the reason why "he is too greedy as poet and prosodist, and too anxious to 'load every rift with ore'". It is the source of his originality as also of his singularity and eccentricity both as poet and as man.

But not only did this fierce intensity of concentration make him an eccentric, in spite of himself; it strung him to a tense, relentless, minute-to-minute effort to strive after the best that he could see. "This is that chastity of mind which seems to lie at the very heart and be the parent of all other good, the seeing at once what is best, the holding to that, and the not allowing anything else whatever to be even heard pleading to the contrary." But an intensity like this can lead to an anguish that we should call unendurable did we not know that it can in fact be somehow endured. It did. He felt himself to be Time's eunuch, and even to be patient was still further to torment himself.

Soul, self; come, poor Jackself, I do advise
 You, jaded, let be; call off thoughts awhile
 Elsewhere; leave comfort root-room; let joy size
 At god knows when to God knows what; whose smile
 'S not wrung, see you; unforeseen times rather—as skies
 Between pie mountains—lights a lovely mile.

But there were aggravating circumstances, all interacting with one another. His health grew steadily worse and deteriorated into a chronic nervous prostration; a rack "where, selfwrung,

selfstrung, sheathe- and shelterless, thoughts against thoughts in groans grind". As the poems and letters of his early priesthood show, the sight of physical and moral evil and of the contrast between the beauty of nature and grace and the evil that he met in human nature not only caused him unspeakable suffering but also, I think, went some way to shattering his health. In Dublin he felt a stranger and alone, "at a third remove". His scrupulousness increased till it got out of hand.

"Out of hand"—but it had always been there. Earlier on I tried to convey something of the flavour of the "either-or" spirituality of the Tractarians; it is a spirituality that easily engenders a restless scrupulosity in a rich and many-sided nature; for instead of making for a calm inner detachment from the pursuits and interests that his gifts inspire, it is all too liable to goad a man into a sheer severance of them, in the belief that only so can he sincerely serve God "and Him alone". Hopkins's ascetical training in the Society of Jesus did something to restore a balance and to take the edge off such a scrupulosity. But much remained. It is this that underlies his extreme view, revealed in his correspondence, of the relation of his art to his priesthood and of the place of literature and the arts in the Society of Jesus,* and it underlies the fuss he makes (the word is Fr. D'Arcy's) about the possible publication of his poetry and the perils of fame. It worried Dixon, as well it might. To Bridges he wrote (August 24, 1884): "It always seems to me that poetry is unprofessional, but that is what I have said to myself, not others to me." Certainly his fellow-Jesuits would disagree and judge him over-anxious, as Fr. D'Arcy does, and this not in any Whig spirit of history but in principle. "A great work by an Englishman is like a great battle won by England", he wrote to Bridges (October 13, 1886), but to the distressed bewilderment of Canon Dixon he refused to bring this judgement into any relation to his own.

"I destroyed the verse I had written when I entered the Society and meant to write no more; the *Deutschland* I began after a long interval at the chance suggestion of my superior, but that being done it is a question whether I did well to write anything else." And as for publication, he seems to have wanted an order of obedience (though even about this he was timid) to publish work of the existence of which his superiors were ignorant and which he thought it self-willed to bring to their notice. In other ways, too, as in his agonies over examination papers, he appears, in the fearful prostration of his body, to have reverted at the end

* *Correspondence of G. M. Hopkins and R. W. Dixon* (Abbott), pp. 14-15 (Oct. 5, 1878) and especially pp. 88-90 and 93 (Nov. 2-Dec. 1, 1881).

of his life to the "either-or" asceticism of his pre-Jesuit days, and the quality of his scrupulousness recalls Hurrell Froude's anxious self-accusations that he may be making the attempt to do something for another a mere excuse for sheer self-assertion and self-satisfaction. But whereas Froude's spirit was one of swift gaiety, Hopkins's was no longer so. On April 24, 1885, he wrote to Baillie: "The melancholy I have all my life been subject to has become of late years not indeed more intense in its fits but rather more distributed, constant, and crippling. One, the lightest but a very inconvenient form of it, is daily anxiety about work to be done, which makes me break off or never finish all that lies outside that work. It is useless to write more on this: when I am at the worst, though my judgement is never affected, my state is much like madness."

We hear our hearts grate on themselves: it kills
To bruise them dearer.

It is a horrifying story. But Hopkins would have said that this story is merely the outside record of events through which Christ, the Master, was touching him with a finger of infinite love, a "heaven-handling", and that the inside story is one of spiritual dereliction in which the shipwreck is a harvest. The utter desolation of his "winter world" he regarded as a privilege.* But so to welcome suffering does not in the least anaesthetize it: it does not entail that agony of mind ceases to be frantic agony of mind or that one sees the point of it.

No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.

In the blackest days of August or September, 1884, Hopkins wrote in a note-book: "Man was created to praise etc. . . . And the other things on earth—take it that weakness, ill health, every cross is a help. Calix quem Pater meus dedit mihi non bibam illud?"† This he believed "as wholly as a man can believe anything"; but in desolation the belief does not lighten the blackness, and the mind still hangs over "cliffs of fall Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed".

* *Poems*, 40, 45, 46. Compare the letter to Bridges of April 29, 1869 (Abbott XXIII) and to Dixon of July 3 (?), 1886 (Abbott, pp. 137-8).

† Humphry House, *Note-books and Papers*, p. 416; Hopkins is referring to the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

But this is where so many of his readers "fable and miss", as Hopkins knew they must. We are back where we started from. Even in 1942 critics were still writing of the weakening of Hopkins's "faith", on the evidence of these Dublin sonnets. This is to miss completely what they are about, as also what much of *The Wreck of the Deutschland* is about. It is natural, if after patient study of the poems and the relevant documents and after the effort of imaginative sympathy a man cannot divine what it feels like to be as Hopkins was, communication does indeed appear to be impossible. It is not that it is essential to share his beliefs, though without them it is perhaps doubtful whether the emotional and even the aesthetic response will be qualitatively quite the same as what they would be if the beliefs were shared; but it is essential, I think, that there should be a certain homogeneity of religious and moral outlook in Hopkins and his readers, for otherwise his work is either incomprehensible or else evocative of a distorted response. What the bounds of this homogeneity are is obscure, but the history of Hopkins criticism shows that simply to prescribe a willing suspension of disbelief is not to settle the question but to shelve it or to fob oneself off with a sham.

"Surely one vocation cannot destroy another," Dixon had said, and Hopkins replied that he feared lest his purpose be frayed by the "secret solicitations" of the world: he would be passive, for "if our Lord chooses to avail Himself of what I leave at His disposal He can do so with a felicity and with a success which I could never command". In principle and in its context (the letter is that of December 1, 1881) this may betray an "exaggerated scrupulosity". But the fame that alarmed him found out the poetry that made him anxious, and half a century afterwards broadcast his name and his faith; and the priest who called himself Time's eunuch "has defeated Time with many a poem that both breeds and wakes".

VINCENT TURNER, S.J.

THE ENDURING ELEMENT IN POPE

I

THIS year sees not only the centenary of the birth of Gerard Hopkins, one of the two outstandingly great Catholic poets born in England, but the bi-centenary of the death of the other. Unlike Hopkins, "no authors ever had so much fame in their own lifetime as Pope and Voltaire, and Pope's poetry has been as much admired since his death as during his life". That may well have been true in 1778, when Dr. Johnson made the remark to Allan Ramsay, who maintained the opposite, but what strikes us most forcibly today when we seek to pay a passing tribute to Pope's genius is the fluctuation of opinion that has prevailed among the literary world since the poet breathed his last on 30 May, 1744.

It is true that Pope is more often quoted today (sometimes wrongly) than any other English writer save Shakespeare and Dickens; "A little learning is a dang'rous thing" and "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread" are only two out of the many fragments of Pope that have passed into the language; the proverbial old lady who complained that *Hamlet* was full of quotations might have reasonably made the same charge against *Pope's Poetical Works*; "as the poet Pope, sir, says . . ." was a frequent tag of Mr. Wodehouse's Jeeves; and I was surprised to learn from a recent biography that in the Dublin school of W. B. Yeats "Pope was the only poet since Shakespeare". But in England, at any rate, among the diminishing band who still regard poetry as a serious preoccupation and who agree with Dr. Richards that the poet is "the point at which the growth of the mind shows itself", few will quarrel with Dr. Leavis's opening remark that "Pope has had bad luck".

The "bad luck" began as early as 1756, when Warton placed Pope among the "second class" of poets, though it is true that he gave the "first class" to only three (Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton): that may have been the reason for Allan Ramsay's disagreement with Johnson. But I don't think the disparagement of Pope became general till the early years of the nineteenth century, when we find Byron writing: "The great cause of the present deplorable state of English poetry is to be attributed to that absurd and systematic depreciation of Pope in which, for the last few years, there has been a kind of epidemical concurrence. . . ." Byron, of course, was the hero of a forlorn hope:

the majority of readers did not agree that "the present state of English poetry" was "deplorable"; they argued, justly, that the poetry of Wordsworth and his followers (what we call for convenience's sake "the Romantic Revival") was a beneficent change from the "gaudy and inane phraseology" of later eighteenth-century diction. Wordsworth, though derided at first, had succeeded in moulding the public taste to his own, had "created the taste by which he was to be enjoyed".

In every age the general reading public is apt to rush to extremes. As soon as it had taken on Wordsworth, it scoffed at the eighteenth century root and branch. Wordsworth, it should be remembered, founded his case against Poetic Diction chiefly on the minor works of Gray; the only thing of Pope he mentions is that early minor work, *The Messiah*. The later Wordsworthians were "more Royalist than the King" and they abandoned all poetry between Milton and the *Lyrical Ballads*, save a few poems by Gray and Collins and Cowper, as poor, old-fashioned stuff. But Byron reminds us that it was not only the supporters of Wordsworth who disparaged Pope. The bitterest opponents of the "revivalists", the Edinburgh reviewers, adopted a similar patronizing attitude to the greatest poet of the Augustan Age. . . .

"Of the Augustan Age": in that phrase lies, I think, the root of the disparagement, which reached its climax, not in Byron's time but in the middle Victorian period. A similar blend of repulsion and unwilling fascination which overcame the Bloomsbury of the nineteen-twenties when they looked at the Victorian age was present among the Victorians themselves when they looked at the eighteenth century and particularly that part of it which Goldsmith christened the "Augustan" age. While not forgetting that literary history (like history in general) never exactly repeats itself, we can find some parallels in the results, and even in the style, of these two patronising parties. A very similar blend of exasperated irony and fascinated sentimentality which we get in Lytton Strachey we find also in Thackeray's lectures on the *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* and in A. W. Ward's introductory memoir to the *Globe* edition of Pope.

There was a creditable side to this Victorian disparagement, if not to Lytton Strachey's. Both Ward and Thackeray thought, not without reason, that the moral, social and political life of their time was superior to that of the Augustans. Where they were wrong was in supposing that the *literature* of the Augustans was of necessity inferior as well. Thackeray compared Swift to a highwayman ("he takes the road like Macheath and makes

society stand and deliver . . .")—a piece of sentimental irrelevancy that is even more absurd than Bloomsbury's equating of antimacassars and prudery with the value of the literary works of the Victorians. Ward and Thackeray alike considered Pope to have been unlucky in the time of his birth; that he would have been a greater poet had poetry not been so much bound up with politics in his day.

But was it? It was bound up with society, certainly, in a way that the Victorians, living in a more complicated England, could not appreciate; both Ward and Thackeray show themselves irritated by the Augustans' insistence on "reason" and "sense". "The plainest common sense" that Wordsworth praised in Pope was even plainer to them; they were exasperated by Pope's apparent conviction that this "common sense" was something profound and at the root of civilization. It was nothing of the kind (they said in effect); on the contrary, it was a shallow growth, fitting to the sterile, sceptical life of the times.

We do not need today to take either side, nor do we need to plume ourselves on being able to view the position dispassionately. It is not any superior judgment on our part that enables us to do this; it is simply the inevitable result of a more distant perspective. We can see now that Pope and Swift and Addison were right in thinking that their civilization was based on certain well-understood principles. "Politeness was not merely superficial," writes F. R. Leavis, "it was the service of a culture and a civilization, and the substance and solid bases were so undeniably there that there was no need to discuss them or to ask what was meant by 'Sense'." Thackeray and Ward (and Matthew Arnold) were right in so far as they saw the precariousness of this Augustan convention; they were wrong in thinking that to Addison and Pope (and even to Swift) the basis of the code was not profound. They were wrong in their conception of satire: to write great satire, a poet requires not only an audience which welcomes each hard-hitting stroke but a standard of values by which the "fool or knave" he aims at is unquestionably judged.

This misconception was aided and abetted by the celebrated formula propounded by Matthew Arnold to distinguish "poetry conceived and composed in the soul" and "poetry conceived and composed in the wits"—as if the "moral" poetry Arnold so rightly admired above all could have been written without *both* qualities. But even today, when we have learned to reject Arnold's distinction as the most superficial that great critic ever made, we hear far too much of two other patronizing appreciations of Pope that are only disparagement disguised. I refer to his

"faultless versification" and the "delightfully malicious" Pope of the Bloomsbury legend, the "fiendish monkey" pouring out his venom on friend and foe alike.

"Because his versification is perfect," said Byron urbanely, "it is assumed that it is his only perfection; because his truths are so clear, it is asserted that he has no invention; and because he is always intelligible, it is taken for granted that he has no genius. . . ." That is well put, and perhaps our only criticism would be that the "perfect versification" of Pope is not nearly so important a thing as both Byron and Ward thought. Ward refers inanely to

the extraordinary and perhaps unparalleled fact that there is little vital difference, so far as form is concerned, between some of the earliest and some of the latest of Pope's productions. His early pieces lack the vigour of wit and the brilliance of antithesis of his later works; but they have the same felicity of expression and the same easy flow of versification. It is only in the management of rhymes that Pope's earliest productions are comparatively negligent. . . .

Without wit and imagination and dramatic quality and personal sensitiveness, the "form" and "versification" that Ward admired would be things of little account. Nobody but a half-wit would dwell, when considering *Hamlet* or *Lear*, on Shakespeare's mastery of the blank-verse form or on the excellence of his metaphors; but it is the sanctioned approach to Pope to dwell largely on his handling of the heroic couplet, with the implied comment that there is little else to talk about. Ward, of course, "perceived Pope's shortcomings and lamented his faults", but even so great an admirer of Pope as Mr. Tillotson can think that in saying "Pope's verse is, of course, almost faultless", he is adding something fresh to our admiration of the poems he so excellently deals with. With Ward (if not with Mr. Tillotson) it is almost as though the critic were discussing, with amiable patronage, a "copy of verses" sent him by some ambitious undergraduate.

That Pope's personal character (so far as we know it) should be a topic of much concern to both admirers and detractors of Pope's poetry says much for the confusion that exists between biography and literary criticism. Thackeray was a gentleman: he put down all the things to Pope's credit as well as all the things (the legends rather) to Pope's disrepute. The latter was enough for Bloomsbury and for a writer in the *Evening News* recently: I am suspicious of these "admirers" of Pope when they start to patronize—we can be thankful that Shakespeare's life is mostly a blank to us. "If nothing had been known but the works,"

asks Dr. Leavis pertinently, "would 'envy', 'venom', 'malice', 'spite' and the rest have played so large a part in the commentary?" Ward, of course, related the "malice" of Pope to the "unnatural emotion" of the Augustan Age (a better view, by the way, than the alleged "inhibition" of Pope preached by the undigested-Freudian school of Lytton Strachey):

As the age appears to us in the mirror of the literature which professedly and unhesitatingly attached itself to the world of politics, fashion and learning, it is an unnatural age, because licentious in every direction except that of the form which by its own authority it had chosen as the exponent of its very spirit and essence. All the emotions of the Augustans, except their hatreds, seem shallow and transitory, and most of all so in their literary expression. . . . The real epos of society under Queen Anne, though designed as a burlesque, is Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. . . .

It would be as true to say that the "real epos of society" under Queen Victoria, though "designed as a burlesque", was Dickens's account of the Circumlocution Office in *Little Dorrit*, and Dr. Ward, who wrote an admirable *Dickens* for Macmillan's *English Men of Letters* series, would have seen the absurdity of that.

Thackeray, as I have said, was fairer to Pope. Although he agreed with those who shook their heads over the licentiousness of the Augustan Age, he not only felt a certain nostalgic sentimentality for the "good old days" but countered his description of Pope's malicious wit with the facts that Pope was a model of affectionate duty to his parents and that "to name Pope's friends is to name the best men of his time". And he ends his account with a positive panegyric:

The shafts of his satire rise sublimely; no poet's verse ever mounted higher than that wonderful flight with which *The Dunciad* concludes. . . . It is heroic courage speaking, a splendid declaration of righteous wrath and war. . . . It is a wonderful and victorious single combat in that great battle which has always been waging since society began. . . . In the presence of the great occasion, the great soul flashes out and conquers transcendent. . . .

"The great soul flashes out!" is a fitting and Victorian answer to those who thought what Arnold a little later on put into words, that to be "intelligent" or "witty" meant that a poet was disregarding his "soul". How much more admirable is Thackeray's panegyric than the grudging admiration of Ward or the mannered delight of Lytton Strachey at the "fiendish monkey" or (to take a more recent instance) the lofty disapproval of the *Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (1941):

We shall be untrue to the soul of great literature if we refuse to admit that there are higher reaches of poetry to which Pope had no access. . . . We have only to turn to the lyrics of Blake to find a world of poetry from which Pope was everlastingly shut out; and it is a better one than he chose to inhabit.

II

Pope, then, will be admitted to have received more than his share of patronage and irrelevant admiration—for it is not only to those readers “who have a nice sense of finish” (as George Sampson puts it) that the Augustan poet makes his appeal. Both the academic virtues admired by Ward and Mr. Sampson and the place the poet holds in Augustan civilization are subsidiary traits in the genius of Pope. What is important is that quality so admirably spoken of by Mr. Tillotson when he says that “Pope’s greatest triumph in the couplet lies in his making it dramatic”. We can even say, relegating the “heroic couplet” to the guard’s van of academic luggage, that it is in this very *dramatic* quality that Pope escapes from being a poet simply of his own time and place.

The best-known passage of all makes this plain. We know that Addison was the model for Atticus in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, but if Addison’s reputation had been totally obscured today, the Atticus portrait would not be affected in the least. We do not regard this “portrait” of Addison in the same way as we do Fielding’s account of Addison and Steele in the *Journey from This World to the Next*:

Virgil then came up to me, with Mr. Addison under his arm. . . . I acquainted Virgil with the discovery made by Mr. Warburton of the Eleusinian mysteries couched in his sixth book. “What mysteries?” said Mr. Addison. “The Eleusinian,” answered Virgil, “which I have disclosed in my sixth book.” “How!” replied Addison. “You never mentioned a word of any such mysteries to me in all our acquaintance.” “I thought it was unnecessary,” cried the other, “to a man of your infinite learning: besides, you always told me you perfectly understood my meaning.” Upon this I thought the critic looked a little out of countenance, and turned aside to a very merry spirit, one Dick Steele, who embraced him and told him he had been the greatest man on earth, that he readily resigned up all the merit of his own works to him. Upon which Addison gave him a gracious smile, and, clapping him on the back with much solemnity, cried out: “Well said, Dick!”

This is the “malicious” satire that is supposed to be the one virtue of Pope—with, of course, “faultless versification” added.

Surely it is obvious that Fielding here is at once more direct and less *profound* than Pope? We do not think of a model when we read the familiar lines:

Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse and live with ease:
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne;
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer. . . .
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?

It is pre-eminently a dramatic portrait, a feat of dramatic skill, far more dramatic than anything in the overrated (at the time) William Congreve.

When read quickly, Pope gives the impression of witty epigram, nothing more; it is when we begin to read him slowly, as he should be read, that we realize the immense variety of accent, of stress, that is at Pope's command at his greatest. Take, for example, this from an early work, the *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*:

What tho' no friends in sable weeds appear,
Grieve for an hour perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What tho' no weeping Loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face?
What tho' no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be drest,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow;
While Angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made. . . .

Whether we note the different accent, according to the different feeling, placed on "grieve" and "mourn"; or admire the way in which Pope raises his voice (as it were) in indignation over "mockery"; or see the solemnity behind the lingering stress and carrying-over of the last two lines here; we shall feel that to talk aridly of "faultless" or "*almost* faultless" versification is a poor compliment to pay Pope's genius. It should be plain that we do

not notice any of these academic points when we read Pope; Pope has so arranged it that we *must* read it the way he wants us to and in no other; therein resides his genius, even in so early a poem as this. We do well to notice the *dramatic* quality represented by our virtual abandonment to Pope, because that is the way Shakespeare works, too; that is *his* hold upon us, whether in the study or on the stage, making irrelevant and slightly ridiculous Mr. Bernard Shaw's desire for the author's copy of *Hamlet*. And, when in the last but one line of this amazing *Elegy*, Pope writes

Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er . . .

we are certain that there must be some academic name for that gasping stress upon "gasp", but we (or, at any rate, I) don't know it, and don't want to know it.

What strikes an unprejudiced observer most strongly is not Pope's "perfect form" nor his "hatred", but his immense concern for humanity. Thackeray noticed this when quoting the last lines of *The Dunciad*, but it is even more observable throughout the *Moral Essays*. There we have the "real epos of society under Queen Anne", not in the *Rape of the Lock*, which remains a witty, charming piece of burlesque. The *Moral Essays* are far from being burlesque. I am referring, of course, to *Moral Essays in Four Epistles to Several Persons*, not to the inferior *Essay on Man*, which also consists of four epistles. The *Essay on Man* has some fine moments, but it is mainly undigested philosophy: the *Moral Essays* proper are less abstract, more concerned with human beings. Although Pope repeats in Epistle One the argument of the *Essay on Man*:

Search then the RULING PASSION; there, alone,
The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known . . .

it is not as philosophy that the *Four Epistles* are valuable for us, nor yet primarily as history, any more than are the paintings of Hogarth. It is what Pope makes of the assertion quoted that matters; what he makes of it in terms of poetry, of humanity. Arnold's celebrated suggestion, "poetry is the truth, philosophy the illusion", may be true—as far as poetry is concerned. Fielding (to David Garnett's disgust) and Dickens (e.g. *Martin Chuzzlewit*) adopted the theory of the Ruling Passion; it may not be defensible as philosophy or psychology, but Dickens, Fielding and Pope made something valuable out of it as literature.

With the possible exception of *The Dunciad*, the Notes to the *Moral Essays* are the most voluminous of any in Pope's works. But it is no discredit at all to the scholars' labours to say that for the *general* reader all or most of the Notes can be dispensed with to advantage. For example:

True, some are open, and to all men known;
Others so very close, they're hid from none;
(So Darkness strikes the sense no less than Light.)
Thus gracious CHANDOS is belov'd at sight;
And ev'ry child hates Shylock. . . .

There is a 25-line Note on "Chandos" in the *Globe* edition, but for the ordinary reader it is as superfluous as a similar Note would be on "Shylock". I am told that the character of Squire Allworthy in Fielding's *Tom Jones* was drawn from some actual person Fielding knew, but for anyone except a biographer of the novelist the information is superfluous. The more lengthy portraits in the *Moral Essays* are as much separate creations as the Atticus portrait is—more so, in fact, because Addison lives in literature, whereas the Whartons and Villiers don't.

We are apt still to be put off by the term "satire", forgetting that the form was merely an eighteenth-century mode and included many things we should not ordinarily call "satirical" today. The best parts of the *Moral Essays* are not simply Pope's indignation let loose, though that very indignation was positive as well as negative, Pope being seriously concerned for the welfare of the civilization that was being attacked from within; the best parts are not simply in the Line of Wit but also in the tradition of Humour that links Dickens with Ben Jonson. Any *limited* notion of "wit" (to say nothing of "almost faultless versification") seems absurd when we are confronted with the fine ending to Epistle One:

Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.
Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins . . .
"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a Saint provoke,"
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)
"No, let a charming Chintz, and Brussels lace,
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—
And—Betty—give this Cheek a little Red."
The courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd
An humble servant to all human kind,

Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,
 "If—where I'm going—I could serve you, Sir?" . . .
 And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath,
 Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:
 Such in those moments, as in all the past,
 "Oh, save my Country, Heav'n!" shall be your last.

Pope himself was a patriot, though not in Dr. Johnson's definition, as is apparent throughout Epistle Three ("Of the Use of Riches"):

In vain may Heroes fight, and Patriots rave,
 If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.
 Once, we confess, beneath the Patriot's cloak,
 From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke,
 And jingling down the back-stairs told the crew,
 "Old Cato is as great a rogue as you."
 Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
 That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly!
 Gold imp'd by thee can compass hardest things,
 Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings. . . .

And for a vivid contrast to all the vile uses of riches, Pope gives us the Man of Ross who "went about doing good" not on untold wealth but on "five hundred pounds a year". So far from "envy" and "malice", Pope in these essays appears to take the same stand as Dickens did later on, cherishing charity and the simple life above all. The things he laughs at (not in "envy", surely?) are ostentation and the peculiar vices of Courts. So far from praising this society (as Ward implies), Pope heaps scorn upon it for its vice and frivolity—but he doesn't go so far as Swift, whose contempt of mankind led him to compose the *Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*. Pope had no contempt for mankind; only for its vices and its follies. And no one could have given that view with so much potency of expression who had not been a rather severe critic of himself first of all. I think Pope knew himself as none but the very greatest men can hope to do.

"It is heroic courage speaking," said Thackeray of the closing lines of *The Dunciad*. There is courage, too, of a more personal order in these less well-known lines from the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, one of the few occasions on which Pope deals with those personal infirmities which so delight the vulgar biographer—and (by contrast with all that sneering crew of demi-wits) with what *humour* does he do it!

There are, who to my person pay their court:
 I cough like Horace, and, tho' lean, am short;
 Ammon's great son one shoulder had too high,
 Such Ovid's nose, and "Sir! you have an eye!"—
 Go on, obliging creatures, make me see
 All that disgrac'd my betters met in me.
 Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,
 "Just so immortal Maro held his head":
 And when I die, be sure you let me know,
 Great Homer died three thousand years ago.

R. C. CHURCHILL.

FOUR POEMS ON MARY MAGDALENE

I

Remember Mary Magdalene,
 Once in a night so near you and so far.
 Held by her beauty and her golden hair
 Embraced and yet most desolate you were.

Those tresses could not bind you—you were falling
 For ever out of her white arms like a waterfall,
 The senses' frail net cast in eternity
 Meshes where suns, birds, worlds and lovers flow away.

Mourning for earthly love, she couldn't save
 The creature from its loneliness
 Or hold her lover back one hour from death.

For her a nameless love consumed
 With grief beside you all that night,
 The vigil of the hidden heart,
 The soul's unquenchable desire for God.

II.

Child of the town, she knew the faces of people
 As country girls know all the kinds of flowers.
 She knew in men the cruel, the timid and the sensuous,
 The commonplace, the bestial and the beautiful.

And sometimes in the proud bearing of a man,
 The fineness of the hair, the eyes' deep gaze,
 A voice, a mouth's delicate line, a hand's gentleness
 She fancied she had found the perfect one.

But learned how all are mortal, and forbore.

Practised how to give all and to take nothing,
 Learned not to look too deep, or draw too near,
 To bear inviolate her loneliness,
 Her art, to be withdrawn, and like the earth,
 A cloud, the sea, a song, a garden or a river.

Was it His voice she heard, or was God known to her
 In the way He touched a beggar with his hand,
 Or was He holding in His arms a child,
 Or with a scourge striding in Heaven's anger through the temple?
 Or was it enough only to see His face, to know Him?

Easy for her to see God in a man!
 She knew the weak who ask for love—He gave.
 The cruel who scorn the woman—He received her.
 She who had endured desire, in Him found none,
 And yet she knew herself beloved by Him alone
 Whom, weeping, she asked only to adore.

III

Into the night the Magdalene turned away,
 Into a sleep more wide than waking
 Passed through the evening doors of the outgoing day.

Love drew her on towards her tryst with God,
 Guided like a night moth to its chalice
 She entered the soul's darkness like a garden.

Earth's visible flowers from every sense withdrawn
What jasmine, what nocturnal primrose, bloom
By light invisible of the Heavenly sun?

Secret and evergreen garden, living water,
You were there from the beginning, and the rose
Unfolding at heart for ever into quietness,

And she, daughter of love, not Him she sought
A world of grief away, until she found Him,
Her love, her Lord, already before her in the garden.

IV

Now she is pure transparency.
The stained-glass window of her face
Where the light pours all day
Is framed upon two worlds—one is ours,
And one the outer and invisible sky.

Her heart has never stirred out of that joy
Wherein she saw God sitting in her house.
When the sun shines on her, she seems to smile.

His radiance flows through her over us,
Down her waved golden hair like water falls.

KATHLEEN RAINE

III

SOME RECENT BOOKS

Gilbert Keith Chesterton. By Maisie Ward. (Sheed and Ward. 21s.)

By whom should a biography—not a hagiography—be written? By an Achates, who has dogged the master's footsteps, note-book in hand, blind and deaf to all else? But can we be sure that he gives us the life in its proper setting, its proper context; that he has estimated the master's debt to others, his place in a hierarchy of others? Or by a judicious outside critic, detached enough to read the whole story "objectively"? What a poor thing, really, is Southey's life of Wesley! And yet, if we can trust a Boswell to give us the full picture, how few Boswells are to be found! Should the biographer be a disciple, saturated with the master's spirit, unable (perhaps) to put himself outside that circle of ideas? Or one who, though in general sympathy with his subject, had an altogether different approach to life? No better course could have been steered between these shoals than to pick on Mrs. Sheed as the biographer of G. K. Chesterton. A man so influential (in the literal sense of that word) might have had his life written too uncritically by a mere replica of his own personality. A man so controversial might easily have been damned with faint praise by a literary rival. Mrs. Sheed is enough of a Chestertonian to ensure that her treatment avoids the least imputation of sniffiness. She is not so roaring a Chestertonian as to irritate her less sympathetic readers with the constant assurance, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

Meanwhile, it must be admitted that Chesterton was the perfect biographee; not so easy an accomplishment as might be imagined. A more introverted man would have said in his autobiography nearly all there was to be said about himself; Chesterton's tells you all about his relations and friends, but not much more about his own life than his admirable *History of England* tells you about the history of England. A man of specialized intellectual interests would have needed to have his correspondence mutilated with constant scissor-work; what is more tedious than the reactions of the famous scientist to contemporary politics, or the explorer's estimate of contemporary literature? But Chesterton was integrated, no man ever more so; his thought touched everything, and he could not write a triolet in an autograph book without putting, somehow, his whole philosophy into it. A vainer man, or one of less astounding fecundity, would have treasured his scraps only to republish them; importunate editors would have insisted on their disinterment. But Chesterton left a mass of impressions in note-books, of unfinished studies for things he never wrote or wrote, when it came to the point, quite differently, for Mrs. Sheed to quarry in.

She has done that admirably. Perhaps she has been a little too generous with his *juvenilia*; the writing of a boy, however astounding as a feat, however full of promise for the future, may be dull stuff in the reading. But on the whole she has been excellently advised. What makes his letters so infinitely more tolerable than most autobiography letters is there is no high society about them, no Bloomsbury intensesness about them; they are records (as he himself would be proud to boast) of a middle-class sort of world in which we all feel at home. The young man in the shop at Felixstowe who says, when asked for a tennis-racket, "We haven't got any—not got any here . . . Oh, they're out, you know. All out round" (he explained wildly, with a graphic gesture in the direction of the sea and the sky). "All out round. We've left them at places"; who charges, in the end, 10s. 6d. for a second-hand racket, 7s. 6d. for a new one; who, when asked for tennis-balls, brings a large selection of red globes nearly as big as Dutch cheeses, and then says, "Oh, did you want *tennis-balls*?"—why is it that you and I go to Felixstowe, and never meet him? Did Chesterton have all the luck, or can it be that "'tis we, 'tis our estranged faces that miss the many-splendoured thing"?

Not that the limelight falls entirely on Chesterton himself. You get a more human view of people like Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells from the letters (preserved by what miracle? I suppose by Miss Collins) that are here republished. And even where controversy is hottest, as in the Marconi case, you are not allowed to go away without seeing, for what it was worth, the other man's point of view. Chesterton, for all the vigour of his advocacy, was by nature a man of great tolerance. And Mrs. Sheed, as successfully, though perhaps not so effortlessly, is careful to give you the other side of the case. She even throws light on what is, for many people, the chief mystery of Chesterton's career—how even a master of paradox could remain so long outside the Church.

Is he already of yesterday? Events move so quickly in our time that a biography which has entailed so many years of patient research reads, even now, like reminiscences of a dead world. But Chesterton is one of those stars in the literary firmament which go into occultation only to re-emerge. And wherever and whenever there is a Chesterton boom, Mrs. Sheed's book will have to be taken down again. When St. Bonaventure had written his life of St. Francis, an order was issued that all earlier lives of him should be destroyed. It would be an over-enthusiastic reviewer who should suggest a similar proceeding in this case. But if it happened, there would still be very little about Chesterton we should not know.

R. A. K.

Humanism and Theology. By Werner Jaeger. The Aquinas Lecture, 1943. (Marquette University Press, Milwaukee. Pp. 96. \$1.50.)

THIS is a valuable addition to a valuable series. For Professor Jaeger, as a classical scholar of international standing, argues from the premisses of his own particular field of research to the same conclusion as is contained in such books as Gilson's *Christianisme et Philosophie* or Maritain's *Humanisme Intégral*, and thus brings forward a strong collateral defence for their position. The fashion has been, in some quarters at least, to suppose that to model oneself on the humanism of Greece is essentially to adopt an anthropocentric view of the world: humanism and theology standing in irreconcilable opposition. Professor Jaeger has no difficulty in disproving this supposition.

He begins by showing that St. Thomas is a humanist in the sense that his concept of human nature and his rational approach to reality are things which derive from Greek culture. (There is, incidentally, a good section comparing the renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with earlier cultural revivals: "in some respects the rationalism of the pre-Renaissance of the time of St. Thomas was more powerful and unified in its effects on the life of that highly theological period and it laid the foundations for any further rational development, both religious and profane.") One's only regret, in this first part of the lecture, is that Professor Jaeger does not emphasize the fact that St. Thomas's thought is humanist not only because of its approach but also because of its content: its concern for the perfection of human life, and in particular its enrichment of the philosophy of humanism by the theologically derived concept of personality.

The second part of the lecture examines the assumption that the humanism of the Greeks themselves was anthropocentric; it is Protagoras and the sophists, with their "man the measure of all things", who are invoked in support of this contention, and Professor Jaeger shows, on the contrary, that the humanism of the sophists must be viewed not as a climax but as a decline of Greek civilization, and that the theocentricity of Plato, who coined the word *theologia*, is not "an isolated phenomenon in the history of Greek philosophy but in the closest connexion with the entire development of the Greek mind". The cultural ideal of *paideia* arose at the same time, and from the same intellectual mood, as the scepticism of the sophists; but the ideal could in fact only be fulfilled in the theocentric world of Plato: "theology was intended . . . to transcend humanism but at the same time it was the true fulfilment of the task which humanism had formulated". Thus, when we argue that the humanism of St. Thomas is indeed the *humanisme intégral*, and that a man-measured humanism is, precisely as humanism, at best a truncated thing, we are

not arguing *against* classical history: on the contrary, we are stating a thesis for the validity of which the historical development of the Greek mind is itself an argument.

G. V.

The Life of Faith. By Rosalind Murray. (The Centenary Press. Christian Challenge Series. 3s. 6d.)

THIS is an essay in translation: a presentation of the Christian view of life in terms comprehensible to the modern "good pagan", and an attempt to remove a number of misconceptions which ordinarily make it impossible for the two sides to communicate. The job is skilfully and gracefully done. There is a right emphasis on the fact that the difference is not one of accidentals but of a primary attitude to the whole of life, and that the faith is not a series of unconnected beliefs about life but itself a single unified and all-inclusive life. The question "Why are you Christians no better than we if your claim to divine life is true?" is candidly faced; and answered first, as it must be, by a *mea culpa* and an emphasis on the fact that we claim not that grace is magic but that its effect depends upon our strength of will in co-operating with it, and then by a stressing of the difference between the two ethics—the Christian which has *being*, worship, as its supreme purpose; the pagan with its exclusive concern with a man-measured doctrine of social action. (There might also have been here a reference to the fact that while our claim concerns not what we are but what we might become, we are also far from supposing that the often heroic goodness of those not outwardly of the faith is a goodness apart from the grace of God—we do not know how great a multitude is numbered among the "invisible members" of the Church.)

In general, the author's treatment perhaps takes too little explicit account of those surely numerous non-Christians in name, who yet do acknowledge an objective truth and accept to a great extent the Christian idea of what that truth is. But for those who do conform to the definition of the good pagan this book should be an enlightenment, if they have patience and will to read it—which is not to say that it will not be of value to others also, including the Christians themselves.

There are some awkwardnesses of phrasing and punctuation; and a misprint in the Latin quotation on page 91, which incidentally might have been translated into English.

G. V.

Christianity in Peril: The New World Order and the Churches. By Andrew R. Osborn. (Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press. 11s. 6d.)

WE are continually being reminded of the gravity of the crisis through which Christianity is passing, but as so few appear to take these reminders to heart we may hope that Mr. Osborn's challenge will prove more effective than the earlier ones. It is a challenge full of substance, and his severe criticism of the apathy of Christians, their unwillingness to recognize the advent of a new age and their easy contentment with statistics of churchgoing which give a wholly false impression of the vitality of Christian faith, is by no means unjust. If we cannot agree with his attack on the Church as such, we still have to admit that both Catholics and Protestants have failed to give an adequate account of the faith which they hold and thus cast discredit on the whole Christian community.

There is much to be admired also in the author's zeal for truth. The test by which a religion stands or falls is its truth; and, in an age which begins more and more to abandon the notion of objective truth, it is good to be reminded of it. The reminder is particularly necessary in Anglo-Saxon countries, where this dangerous attitude is so often concealed that a German Protestant Pastor has recently admitted: "I had to wait until I had lived in this country for three years before I realized the scepticism latent in British Christianity." Unfortunately, Mr. Osborn is not always consistent. His insistence on the development of thought, as distinct from changes in terminology, implies that truth itself evolves. Nor does he apply his own test to the Catholic claim. Instead, he simply asserts that there is no historical basis for the Primacy of the Pope, and naïvely adds: "As soon as Roman Catholics become informed on this matter, as in course of time they must, truth will remove the obstacle." There are, indeed, serious arguments against the Catholic viewpoint, but they are not given in this book; and there are solid historical grounds for accepting the claim which should make an opponent a little less certain of its easy abandonment.

The root of Mr. Osborn's trouble is that he is himself too much a child of his age, viewing God and the world from man's standpoint and intruding the laws of physical science into a sphere where they have no validity. He is, in fact, a Pelagian, and supposes that man can change the world for good entirely by his own efforts. The Holy Spirit which renews the face of the earth is identified with a certain natural dynamism. Paul possessed a "creative brain", which explains the success of his spiritual offensive; though the author would admit that it was also dependent on God Who, being "*creative in his essence*", ceases to be pure act. The distinction between the natural and supernatural orders thus disappears.

Now it is precisely because the Catholic Church has her roots in the supernatural world that we are confident of her survival; and for the same reason we must judge even more severely the neglect of her members to produce from the rich treasures of her thought a clearer answer to the questionings of our times. With Mr. Osborn we expect Christians to develop their natural powers and to use them to their fullest extent in the service of God. But we know that divine grace will provide the greater part of their strength and that the final triumph is assured through the supernatural vitality of the saints whom God will raise up to challenge this age as they have challenged every other.

EDWARD QUINN.

The Doctrine of the Trinity. By Leonard Hodgson, D.D. (Nisbet. 15s.)

CANON HODGSON'S Croall Lectures for 1942-43 develop his view of the correct approach to Trinitarian theology and contrast the result with the systems of St. Augustine, St. Thomas and Calvin. His acceptance of the Bible as providing the necessary empirical evidence only in factual, not propositional form, has, as he sees clearly, a basic influence on his theory. It follows that the resultant system excludes a great deal of traditional theology which he classes as belonging to the realm of imagination. This rejection he calls an apparent divergence, but inevitably it is more than that. If filiation and procession have no meaning when applied to God, our distinct knowledge of the Persons of the Trinity must be greatly impoverished. Canon Hodgson would say that what is denied to us by the limitations he puts on metaphysics and exegesis is compensated for by the personal and ecclesiastical experience of believers which has triumphed over the inadequate philosophies of the past in maintaining the full divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This strong sense of the part played by the *via affectiva* in the development of dogma is something to be grateful for; yet it cannot be denied that in the preservation of this doctrine in its purity, and the establishment of its dogmatic expression, sheer hard thought and metaphysics far beyond the limits assigned by Canon Hodgson have in fact been of decisive importance. Furthermore, it would seem that belief in the full divinity of the Son must tend to an acceptance of His words in their detailed propositional expression, and with that acceptance the road is clear for the old questions (and answers) of traditional theology.

With his strong emphasis on the knowledge of experience, gained from the missions of the Divine Persons, it is surprising that the author's main question should be, not *Quid tres?* but *Quomodo unum?* To the Thomist the treatment offered is constantly suggestive of a

man of straw. The demonstration of the manifold types of unity with which we are acquainted is very well done, but when it is suggested that the realization of this variety has been reserved for these our times, the form of the argument begins to appear decidedly thin. It was not reserved even for Christian times that τὸ εἶν and τὸ ὄν should be seen as convertible terms, and that there are as many different examples of the former as there are of the latter. It simply is not feasible to view the tradition of the Fathers and the Schoolmen as labouring unto our own day under the persistent handicap of an exclusively mathematical conception of unity, so that their happiest dogmatic formulae were successful only in spite of their authors. The difficulty of the scholastic is not to escape from an exclusively mathematical idea of unity so much as to remember that the mathematician seldom has any other idea of it. It would be easy to praise the assertions and chosen stresses of these lectures on a subject to which few lines of thought are irrelevant; the abandonment of so many lines of thought which in the past have proved relevant is hard to excuse.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

English Prayer Books. An Introduction to the Literature of Christian Public Worship. By Stanley Morison. (Problems of Worship. Edited by the Very Rev. W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, and the Very Rev. F. W. Dwelly, Dean of Liverpool.) (Cambridge University Press. 6s.)

LITURGIOLOGY has suffered less than some of the sciences from that isolation which is the peril of modern specialization. To the historians its debt is considerable. Mabillon demonstrated the value of paleography to a study which till then had been little more than the assembling of texts. Two centuries later the introduction of German methods of analysis led to the discovery of important documents, such as the *Apostolic Tradition*, whose identification by Dom Connolly taught us so much about primitive Roman practice. Moreover, liturgical scholarship has had considerable influence on liturgical book-production. Mid-nineteenth-century standards were cheap. It was Dom Guéranger's protests which awakened consciences and since the founding of the *Société de St. Jean l'Évangéliste* in 1882 there has been steady improvement. English liturgical scholarship, which only dates from Maskell's work in the 1840s, had an immediate and sustained effect on production. Its most notable results in this field have been the series of fine texts which issued from the Chiswick Press in the nineteenth century and the Burns Oates *Ritus* and *Ordo* in the twentieth.

In the current crisis, so stern a test for institutional Christianity,

the revaluation of public worship presents its peculiar problem. In the task of readjustment the progress made by modern liturgiology enables it to come powerfully to the practitioner's aid. If the Dressing Up and Olde Englysshe phases have been happily superseded there remains today the graver danger of archaeological escapism. The pressing need of the moment is to revitalize worship, to bring it into closer relationship with dogma on the one hand and practical life on the other. This need supplies the *raison d'être* of the Problems of Worship series. The Editors' purpose is "to outline in a series of small books, written by members of various churches, the essentials of worship as they have developed in the course of Christian history; to consider the nature and form of . . . supplementary services . . . and to discuss the desirability of special services designed for limited groups".

For liturgical experimentation Anglicans are in an advantageous position. The long restraint within the narrow confines of the Book of Common Prayer inevitably led to a reaction of excessive liturgical freedom. When Cranmer devised the English Rite the creative period was over and the period of scholarship had not yet begun. What is noteworthy is not that the Prayer Book is jejune, but that despite his lack of knowledge and resources Cranmer preserved an essential dignity. The Act of Uniformity required all supplementary services to be composed of the elements of its Annexed Book. The reaction came in the 'seventies. Since Orby Shipley's *Ritual of the Altar* the Act of Uniformity has been increasingly disregarded. The painstaking revision of the 1662 Book was an attempt to stem the tide of lawlessness, but its final rejection by Parliament in 1928 hastened the disintegration of Anglican worship.

Mr. Morison prints two vocational services—for the Navy and for the R.A.F.—as illustrations of the experiments that have so far been made. These forms were drawn up in close consultation with members of the respective Services. No one can deny that they have close contact with the lives and thoughts of those in the callings concerned: "Blessed the call for mental gifts whose multiplicity and ingenuity are like to the aircraft armament, wireless, oxygen plant and the complicated panel of the machine. B. Blessed the call of duty." But the distressing thing is that in achieving that they have strayed far from doctrine. They are not even distinctively Christian. Christ is alluded to but once in each service—at the close of the Official Prayer for the Fleet which appears like a quaint survival, and in the R.A.F. service as a kind of authorship-reference to the Lord's Prayer. "Knowing no guide but some compelling fate . . . Courage and youth went proudly sweeping by" may flatter but will not redeem.

Catholics, with their secure dogmatic moorings, are very differently situated. For them the question is whether vocational ser-

vices are desirable and how they can be developed. Mr. Morison reminds us that guild services flourished in the Middle Ages and that vocational provision is still made for religious orders. It should not, he thinks, be difficult for a Rite which blesses ships and aircraft with proper collects and responses to authorize special services for sailors and airmen. And one might add that the movement in favour of a vernacular liturgy evidences a growing recognition of the needs of contemporary layfolk.

The problem certainly cannot be tackled without some knowledge of the development of liturgical prayer. This knowledge Mr. Morison's book very ably provides. He tells us its aim is "to give some bibliographical account" of English service-books, and in doing this he has placed his unrivalled knowledge of books and their making at our service. But he has done much more. Changes in books were conditioned by development of worship, and both by the general course of history. Hence the author supplies an adequate sketch of the historical background. He summarizes what we know of the early centuries from Justin onwards. He describes that gradual emergence of Low Mass and the paid priest which brought the part-books together to form the Missal; the part played by the Franciscans in the establishment of the *Portiforium*; the fifteenth-century popularity of the *Prymer* (suggesting that its translation was due to the professional interest of booksellers in vernacular literacy. One would like to know its later history. In the Commonwealth period John Gage "encountered with the Book in every bodies Pocket, in many mens Hands, in most mens Mouths".) He stresses the significant fact that the conversions of Ethelbert and Edwin were decisive for English Christianity which, unlike the proletarian Christianity of Rome, was characteristically the religion of kings. Therein lay its strength and its weakness. It was especially important that the English Reformation, so blurred by the controversialists, should be objectively treated. Mr. Morison's account of it is excellent.

Though packed with information the book is pleasantly readable. It is not without its fun: "Musicians and choirs had persuaded themselves, as their fellows do today, that a musical congregation listens to them and that only an unmusical congregation wants to sing." In the rapid work of a busy man deprived by the *Lufstwaffe* of research sources there is scarcely a slip. It does not seem tenable, however, that the keeping of martyr-anniversaries is older than Easter (p. 14), nor did Elizabeth "promptly" repudiate the Pope (p. 53). The section headed "Postscript" contains a valuable bibliography. There is an index of books as well as an index of authors and printers. The latter should include Clarke, Rev. E. A. L., 89.

J. R. WINGFIELD DIGBY, S.J.

La Part du Diable. By Denis de Rougemont. (Brentano's, New York.)

THIS book differs from most of the others that are being written on the present deplorable state of the world, in its extreme readability. It is readable because Denis de Rougemont is not living in an imaginary world, however well constructed in the accepted terminologies of economics, politics or theology. He takes life at just about the level at which the ordinary very intelligent person sees it, and points out what the very intelligent have often been inclined to overlook—the Devil in the picture. De Rougemont has something of W. H. Auden's gift of noticing the relevant signs of change in a world where so many things remain deceptively the same externally.

The Devil is no longer in the public eye. But never has he failed to keep abreast of the times. In the last century, perhaps his most memorable public appearance was as the Poor Relation who sat on the sofa and talked to Ivan Karamasov. Just before the war, W. H. Auden caught a glimpse of him boarding a tram, presumably in an English town, and de Rougemont may be indebted to the poet for his description of the Devil as "the fifth column of all time".

It is nevertheless true that "*ce qui manque le plus aux démocraties en général, et à l'Amérique en particulier, c'est de croire au Diable*". It is impossible, he reminds us, to have a complete picture of the world that does not recognize in evil an agency whose scope goes far beyond that of any human individual, an objective principle of evil. Quoting Baudelaire, he reminds us that "*la plus belle ruse du Diable est de nous persuader qu'il n'existe pas*". It is in fact this "spirit that denies"—denies, that is, all existence—that is the essence of the Fallen Angel. Since God reigns over all existing things, it is this realm of non-existence, negation and denial that is the Devil's sole kingdom. He can destroy, but not create. Hence, as de Rougemont says, his "imperialisme sans limites"—since anything that he gains from God, loses, once separated from God, its very nature. His victories, therefore, are always sterile. And his lure is always, as to Eve he first disclosed it, a Utopia: which de Rougemont brilliantly defines as "*un bien que le réel condamne*".

The Devil, de Rougemont reminds us, is also the Accuser, the Liar. He is always to be recognized in those ideologies that remove from the individual his responsibility—his Christian stature. Hence the Dictator is a diabolical figure since he usurps individuality—though, again, to suppose naïvely that Hitler, for example, is the Devil, is to be duped once more. Would that he were—for apart from being "*un assez pauvre diable*", the problem of evil would be simple. But the Devil is also legion, the mass-mind, the anonymous

press, the radio, "public opinion" and the rest—all these enemies of individual responsibility. So much for the Russian and the German versions. But the Devil has played another well-tried trick on the American and British democracies. Have we not made the old *Pact with the Devil*—the exchange of a man's soul for worldly goods? The American legendary hero, Daniel Webster, cheated the Devil when he came to claim his price. But do all his compatriots fare so well?

So, through one brilliant chapter after another, de Rougemont points to the weaknesses of modern society. A Swiss protestant, a friend of Karl Barth, and influenced by Kierkegaard, de Rougemont, like so many Calvinists, excels rather in denouncing evil than in showing where grace lies. The weakest section of the book is that dealing with the remedies and hopeful signs. He offers three—"*Le bleu du ciel*"—which, as I understand it, means the inherent sanity of the created world; the Word of God; and the Confucian *rectification of names*—that is, the giving back to words of their full and true meanings. This is a far from trivial principle. But it is still a negative cure, for "there is nothing again"—to quote another prophet of our Waste Land—and that applies to words and meanings also. But what no writer seems brave enough to admit is that while the state of the world—of Western Civilization at least—is such that a belief that the end is imminent was never more fully justified, the cure is not to look for far-fetched "hopeful" signs, but to accept the fact that the end no less than the beginning of an epoch carries its responsibilities. And that of these one is still Hope—as much a virtue at the end of the world as at the beginning. Living at the end of a great civilization is an art that it is time we learned to practise with a better grace and without despair.

One parable in this book deserves to survive—being, as de Rougemont says, "*trop belle pour ne pas être vraie*"—another illustration of the Devil as the enemy of personal responsibility, this time *à propos* psychoanalysis, and the theory that there is no sin, only illness. The story is attributed to C. G. Jung, who, when asked if he believed in occult phenomena, replied by telling the story of a patient of his, a lady who had consulted him because she suffered from the conviction that she could not go out of doors without being attacked by birds. For months she had driven in a closed car, but she herself could see quite well that this must be an hallucination, and therefore came to consult the great psychiatrist. The case seemed clear, and the cure straightforward. The months passed, the lady's general condition improved, but the conviction of the attacks by birds still remained. "*Le médecin commençait à désespérer, il envisageait même d'abandonner la cure. (Et vous savez pourtant si rien égale la patience d'un psychanalyste!) Enfin, par un beau jour d'été, la malade vint pour une*

dernière tentative. Il faisait une chaleur torride. Jung possède une villa sur les rives du lac de Zürich. Il proposa que la séance eût lieu dans un petit pavillon au bord de l'eau. On sort, la dame la première; et sitôt dans le jardin, conclut Jung, eh bien. . . . Les oiseaux l'attaquaient!"

KATHLEEN RAINE.

James Joyce. By Harry Levin. (Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.)

THIS short book should do much to dispel the fog of prejudice, fear, irrelevant criticism and equally irrelevant adulation which obscure the figure of James Joyce. Mr. Levin, a brilliant young Harvard scholar (this study was first published in America), is thoroughly well-documented in his subject, and his essay, intended to be read in conjunction with Joyce's work, is admirable, both as introduction and commentary. As a critic, Mr. Levin is often extremely penetrating, though he is occasionally inclined to gallop off on the hobby-horse of too facile generalization.

The great merit of the book is that it should dispose once and for all of the idea that Joyce is a "literary Bolshevik". The author sets Joyce in perspective and relates him to other writers of transitional periods, notably Rabelais, Cervantes, Milton and Swift, with all of whom Joyce has marked affinities. Incidentally, it is strange that many who find *Ulysses* "disgusting" never apply the same epithet to *Gargantua*, *Don Quixote* or *Gulliver's Travels*.

Not only is Joyce's development as an artist orderly and coherent, but no writer was ever more soaked in tradition. T. S. Eliot has cited him as the most orthodox writer of our times and his opinion should carry at least as much weight as that of Joyce's ill-mannered and ill-informed detractors. Without some knowledge of classical and European culture, of Catholic dogma and scholastic philosophy, Joyce would indeed be incomprehensible. On his own admission he required the sanction of St. Thomas Aquinas for his art and, as Mr. Levin points out, he "lost his faith but he kept his categories".

After Joyce's death, in a letter which *The Times* refused to print, T. S. Eliot wrote, "*Ulysses* still seems to me the most considerable work of imagination in English in our time, comparable in importance (though in little else) with the work of Marcel Proust"—to which Mr. Levin adds the true comment that the great difference between Proust and Joyce lies in the fact that the former's mind is temporal and the latter's spatial. Proust is obsessed by the flow of time and the changes it produces in things and people: Joyce's characters are static and "it was (his) lifelong endeavour to conceive the totality of human experience on a simultaneous plane". No one who has read Joyce can fail to be amazed at the sweep and complexity of his imagination, but there are many who fail to realize that he is one of the greatest

humorists of any age. His bitterness, his inability to forgive or forget, his occasional morbidity can never quench his magnificent comic gift. Mr. Levin does well to remind us that the *saeva indignatio* was, at least in part, a reaction to his age and that "the *vis comica* was his natural bent".

The language of Joyce's later works is highly idiosyncratic, but in no sense is it arbitrary. As Mr. Levin acutely says: "While his enemies have attacked him for conducting a campaign to disintegrate literature, his friends have rallied to the 'revolution of the word'. In sober fact, Joyce is neither an obscurantist nor a logodetalist, neither a destroyer nor a creator of language. He could scarcely achieve his microscopic precision and polysemantic subtlety unless he were a neutral. His restless play of allusion depends . . . on the existence of a linguistic *status quo*." This is amusingly demonstrated by parallel translations of a passage from *Finnegan's Wake* into French and into Basic English. The French succeeds in reproducing the rhythm, the internal harmonies and the *double-entendres* of the original: the Basic English is merely an inept paraphrase from which all the magic has evaporated. Joyce's genius was to enrich the novel with the resources of poetry and poetry can never be written in a language of mere denotation, be it Basic English or Esperanto. His language is in the true sense magical: it is incantatory and evocative. Where other writers painfully select alternatives, Joyce manipulates words with a fabulous artifice so as to include them all. His preoccupation with style was even more agonized than Flaubert's. Whatever themes enchant him—the artist and the city, the son in search of a father, the daily round and the world of dreams, the exile and the wanderer, "the real romance is between Joyce and the language".

Joyce's language, though it is a convenient Aunt Sally for cheap sneers and cheaper parody, is obviously not what makes the majority of Catholic readers approach him with suspicion, if not with hostility. Let us face the facts as Mr. Levin does. Joyce "apostatized" from the Church as he repudiated his country. He identified himself with the rebel angels and loudly shouted his "Non serviam". But if Joyce lost his faith, is that a reason why Catholics should lose their charity? Were there no faults in Ireland or in the way in which Catholicism was presented to him to justify a considerable part of his bitterness? Some of those who so abusively attack the lost sheep in the name of orthodoxy might perhaps remember their catechism. Have they forgotten that two of the ways of sharing another's sin are "by silence" and "by provocation"? No one denies that there is both blasphemy and obscenity in Joyce's work; what is more disturbing than either is the sense of frozen isolation, of a creature imprisoned and unable to communicate. He wrote once of himself "to merge his life in the common tide of other lives was harder for him than any fasting or

prayer, and it was his constant failure to do this which caused in his soul at last a sensation of spiritual dryness together with a growth of doubts and scruples". Did anyone ever attempt to break down that wall of loneliness and pride? Is it not possible that if Joyce had met a saint, his attitude might have changed? When a Catholic of Joyce's gifts abandons the Church, might not other Catholics well examine their consciences? As Mr. Levin says in another context, "When we condemn Joyce, we condemn ourselves."

ANTONIA WHITE.

The Style of Sophocles. By F. R. Earp. (Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.)

PROFESSOR EARP, whose *Way of the Greeks* is one of the few general books on classical Greece to be neither sentimental nor tendentious, has now turned to study of a very specialized kind which is frankly addressed to professional scholars but which may be fittingly mentioned here as a legitimate and helpful endeavour to distinguish and appreciate certain elusive elements in a great master's style. Plutarch records a saying of Sophocles himself to the effect that his earliest work was over-influenced by Aeschylean grandeurs; that the style of his next period, though more personal, was somewhat too harsh and artificial; and that having outgrown these phases he arrived at something both better in itself and more expressive of character. The present book follows this development from the earliest to the latest plays, and by careful analysis of words, figures of speech and some points of metre it clarifies the questions involved and justifies the self-judgment of the poet.

Detailed comment on these minutiae would be inappropriate in this review, but one or two points may be noted. Classical Greek, like classical English, distinguished fairly sharply between words which were felt to be specially suitable for poetry and those which were felt to belong to prose. (This is not to say that no interchange was possible, but that there was an initial distinction of classes unknown, for instance, to classical French, which in spite of disputes over "noble" and "ignoble" words was by comparison democratic and uniform.) At this distance of time it is useful to have some examples analysed and to have one's perceptions sharpened by discussion of the poetic, prosaic or neutral associations of particular words.

More generally, Professor Earp illustrates the transition in Sophocles from forms of speech used for their own sake in isolation to forms of speech which belong essentially to the situation and speaker. This means a change from the point of view of the young and self-conscious poet writing drama to that of the mature dramatist who sees the whole drama in its unity and variety and having long ago

mastered words can let the poetry look after itself. In Sophocles' last period, relevance is the key to everything—symmetry, power, transparency, the perfect rightness which may also be seen as sincerity. "Sincerity in art," says Ugo Ojetti, "is not a starting-point but a destination"; and the dictum is admirably verified in the progress from the *Ajax* to the *Oedipus Coloneus*.

WALTER SHEWRING.

Tristan und Isolde, A Poem. By Gottfried von Strassburg, ed. by August Closs. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1944.)

GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG'S *Tristan und Isolde* ranks among the greatest works of art produced by the Middle Ages. Its central theme, the story of the immortal lovers Tristan and Isolde, has captured the imagination of poets and artists all over Europe for more than a thousand years, from the Celtic bards to Wagner, Binyon and Masfield. In fact it could be suggested that these two figures, and their antagonist King Marche to whom they are so indissolubly linked, form a kind of archetypal triangle in the unconscious of European mankind, symbolizing love's timeless struggle against the threat of separation exercised by the hostile world.

Celtic Britain, from whose shores a store of legends has made its way into the rest of Europe, is also the native soil of the Tristan saga, though it was to undergo many transformations and suffer many additions before it returned to England in the twelfth century. Troubadours had sung the epic at the courts of France, adding each one of them his own adornments and embellishments, and it was presumably that great central figure of courtly society, Eleanor of Poitu, who, when she became the queen of Henry II, inspired the Anglo-Norman poet Thomas to write his version of Tristan.

Of the numerous poems and prose versions of the Tristan *motif* which must have existed at his time, Gottfried von Strassburg chose Thomas's French poem as his model. In the relation of the external facts he follows Thomas very closely, and his work has, therefore, by some been called a translation. But, as Dr. Closs points out in his excellent introduction to the present edition of Gottfried's *Tristan*, it is not in the facts but in the interpretation of the emotions and actions of his characters, in the critical attitude towards the beliefs and customs of his time, in the subtlety of his language, that Gottfried reveals his great poetic originality. Already in his Prelude he exalts the inner world, the richness of the inner life. But alongside this attitude, which we may be allowed to term "introvert", we find in him ideals which are fundamentally aesthetic and in whose light we must consider even his conception of "moralitas".

This is the first edition of Gottfried's Middle High German poem

to appear in this country, and at a time when England occupies the unique position of a guardian and champion of European civilization we welcome its appearance with special gratitude. For this poem, written at the beginning of the thirteenth century, is a mirror of a society much more truly European, much more bound by common beliefs and customs and much less hemmed in by national boundaries, than the society in which we move today.

In his Introduction Dr. Closs gives a perfect summing-up of our present state of knowledge in regard to the history of the Tristan theme, a history of which, in spite of considerable studies that have been applied to it, much remains still shrouded in darkness. The Celtic origin of the epic cannot be contested, but, except for a Welsh sixteenth-century tale, the "Ystoria Trystan", which is thought to reflect a much older Celtic version, no direct traces of the Celtic Tristan have come down to us, though many analogies can be found in existing Irish legends. Lost to us also are the earliest French examples—some of them having been merely sung or recited but not written down. The first French court poet associated with the Tristan theme is Beroul, and a poem akin to his in stage of development which was to attain immense and widespread popularity was that of the German twelfth-century poet Eilhart von Oberge. Of both these poems, whose common source may have been the "Estoire" by Robert of Reims known as Li Kievres, we possess only fragments. A greater loss to us may, however, well be the disappearance of the Tristan version by the author of *Cligé*, Chrestien de Troyes, who wrote under the patronage of Eleanor's daughter Marie de Champagne.

Of Thomas's Tristan we possess today only the latter part, including the Breton legend of the other Isolt, Isolt of the White Hands. It is at this point that Gottfried's poem breaks off, and though we know a good deal of Thomas's Tristan from an early Norwegian translation, we have little means of actually comparing the respective texts of Thomas and Gottfried.

Writing presumably in Alsace, if not actually in Strassbourg, Gottfried, of whose estate in life almost nothing is known apart from the clues found in his poem, is the exponent of the two neighbouring orbits of mediaeval civilization, the French and the German, and much of the significance of his poem is the direct result of his absolute mastery of all their external aspects, and, which is even more remarkable for a contemporary, of their psychological problems.

These then are the great outstanding achievements of Gottfried: to have given one of the most vivid and entertaining accounts of courtly life—of festivals and battles, of courtly dress and manner, as of accepted customs which he does not hesitate to criticize. His minute and fluid description of the chase, for instance, is today the only source available for our knowledge of the old French hunting

tradition. Gottfried's true greatness is, however, revealed in his glorification of love, which rises to mystical height and fervour. How subtle is his distinction between the lower forms of love (*niedere Minne*) and the transcendental passion which moves Tristan and Isolt! Not that he denies them their full measure of physical enjoyment and delight in each other. On the contrary, with a psychological insight remarkable in a thirteenth-century writer he emphasizes the harm done to love by fear (*but*) and abstention. It is the unique harmony of physical and spiritual love which evokes a sense of perfection and makes therefore ever present that other state of perfection—Death. So complete is Gottfried's belief in the supremacy of the love he describes that he acclaims God Himself its protector. Tristan and Isolt sin in almost every act that is connected with their mutual relationship. They betray and deceive, they cheat and lie; but the love that moves them to do this is of such purity, of such primeval and at the same time metaphysical force, that they can claim, if not support, at least sympathy from the supreme authority of God when they stand condemned by all other authorities.

It is possible, however, to regard the figure of Tristan in a very different light indeed. Though he combines in himself most of the courtly virtues celebrated in his day, he nevertheless violates the rules of courtly love by the physical possession of his beloved, which was in strict contradiction to the cult of a love perpetually unsatisfied as extolled by the troubadours. This cult of love was perhaps born in opposition to the feudal abuses of marriage, in the same way as heretical mysticism frequently came to challenge the orthodox Church. The close relationship between the religion of love and some forms of mystical experience is clearly shown in Gottfried's description of Tristan and Isolt's life in the love grotto—*la fossiur à la gent amant*.

In connection with the various arguments hinted at above, special attention may be drawn to a book by Denis de Rougement (*Passion and Society*, translated by Montgomery Belgion. Faber and Faber, London, 1940), which, taking the Tristan myth as a starting-point for discussing problems of acute impact on contemporary society, would form a valuable addition to Dr. Closs's otherwise very exhaustive bibliography.

The present volume, well annotated and with a good vocabulary, represents an unfortunately greatly abridged edition of Gottfried's poem, and it is perhaps to be regretted that in the interest of students not completely familiar with the original the editor has not given a short summary of the missing passages. As it is, the single chapters are well rounded off and present, each one of them, a scene with the unity of a mediæval miniature painting.

LÉONTE COHN.

The Substance of Politics. By A. Appadorai, M.A., Ph.D. (Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. APPADORAI has almost succeeded in providing a perfect textbook of political science. Special studies, monographs, essays, of varying value, exist in abundance; but it is very difficult indeed to find books which expound adequately and simply the basic principles. Here at last is one which is admirably suited to the needs of the undergraduates whom the author has principally in view, and which will be welcomed also by far wider circles of readers, since we are all now, both by choice and necessity, students of politics. The first part is devoted to theory; the familiar problems of the origin and purpose of the State, sovereignty, forms of government, being examined afresh. In presenting the classical views on all these subjects Mr. Appadorai inevitably tends to produce the effect of a history of politics rather than an exposition of firmly based principles; this tendency is, however, mitigated by much constructive and enlightening criticism. The second part is a survey of politics in practice, of the history of governments, modern constitutions and administration. In this part, too, the author displays a considerable knowledge of history and familiarity with a large number of political thinkers. Naturally he pays special attention to the Indian constitution.

The book is not a complete success, because it lacks a clear and definite philosophical background, although the views of the author are very much in accordance with a healthy philosophy of politics. It would have been illuminating, for instance, to have opened with an essay on human nature, which is the raw material of politics, as Heinrich Rommen does in his *Der Staat in der katholischen Gedankenwelt* (a book which badly needs a translator and a publisher in England). Moreover, it is surprising that a student of Loyola College, whatever his own religion may be, should ignore altogether the work of the great Spanish political thinkers, especially Suarez; and one might have expected more than one reference to St. Thomas Aquinas and to the Encyclicals. These works, after all, are recognized on all sides as of first-rate importance in the development of political thought. Finally, one notable point about the book, which makes up for some of the defects, is its extraordinarily cheap price.

EDWARD QUINN.

One Fight More. By Alan Thornhill, formerly Fellow and Chaplain of Hertford College, Oxon. (Frederick Muller, Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

THIS small book is an attractive, potted biography of a delightful man, Canon Streeter, the most distinguished convert which the so-called Oxford Groups have attracted. Mr. Thornhill has given us a lifelike

study of a noble Christian, but the book would have gained if the author had been more modest in his claims for the Oxford Groups. It is interesting to be reminded that Mr. A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol, was one of a group of signatories of a letter to *The Times* protesting against criticism of the Groups based "on misunderstanding and unfounded rumour", but even this fact, and one or two like it, does not justify the author in asserting that in 1933 "England in her own characteristic way was slowly and often reluctantly taking the Group to her heart". Mr. Thornhill, like every other member of the Group, consistently evades the real criticisms of the movement. He quotes Canon Streeter's comparison between the colloquial Greek of the Gospels and the colloquial English of the Group apostles. He forgets that the enemies of the Faith have recognized the unique loveliness and dignity of the Gospels, and that Dr. Buchman's friends have admitted the bottomless vulgarity of so many of his pronouncements. Colloquialisms are an integral element in language, irrespective of time and place, but the vulgarity of Buchmanism would seem to be a special by-product of an age of ballyhoo, high-pressure publicity and mass-produced slogans. "Why shouldn't we stay in posh hotels? Isn't God a millionaire?" There is nothing in the least like this well-known saying of Dr. Buchman's in the colloquial Greek of the Gospels.

The central thesis of this book is that where the statesmen failed to preserve peace, Dr. Buchman would have succeeded. Of course if all mankind practised what Christ preached there would be no wars (and no millionaires), but once Hitler had attained power the only hope of averting a European war was to reoccupy the Rhineland the moment he declared conscription, and our best hope of avoiding defeat, once the Rhineland had been reoccupied, was to support Mr. Churchill's campaign for rearmament. There was, of course, always the possibility of a miracle, the conversion of Hitler, but though we should pray for, we have no right to budget for, miracles.

The case against Buchmanism, which Mr. Thornhill does not meet, is that the Groups all unconsciously played the Nazi game. At a time when Hitler was concentrating on material rearmament Germany had everything to gain from the Buchmanite insistence on moral rearmament as the *only* remedy. The fate of enslaved millions depended on the intervention of America. I do not remember Dr. Buchman making one statement during those critical years in support of Mr. Roosevelt's campaign. I do not even remember him withdrawing his tribute to Hitler ("I thank heaven for a man like Adolf Hitler"), or to Himmler, described by Dr. Buchman as "a great lad" three years after the establishment of the Gestapo.

I have just received a pamphlet, ". . . Being Frank about Buchman", published by Mayfair Advertising, Ltd. It would be interesting

to see what reply, if any, Mr. Thornhill would make to one of the most damning and well-documented indictments that I have ever seen.

ARNOLD LUNN.

Murder of a Nation. By G. M. Godden. (Burns Oates & Washbourne. 2s. 6d.)

MISS GODDEN'S book is to be welcomed. Though an interim report, it is not, it must be stressed, a mere piece of wartime propaganda. On the contrary, it is for the most part a dispassionate statement of German policy and its methods, a policy which is derived from the policies of the past and which has been developed and perfected under the present Nazi administration. The book illustrates three things. First, Poland is part and parcel of Western Europe: its architecture is our architecture, its history is concerned with the same business as our history, and its intellectual life has been nourished by the familiar books on which our intellectual life has been nourished. Secondly, there is a unity and a tempered strength in the culture of Poland for which the materialistic nationalism of the modern age can furnish no adequate explanation. Thirdly, history and geography have made Poland, in Napoleon's phrase, "the keystone of the European Arch". If we wish to restore Europe, we must restore Poland.

THOMAS CHARLES EDWARDS.

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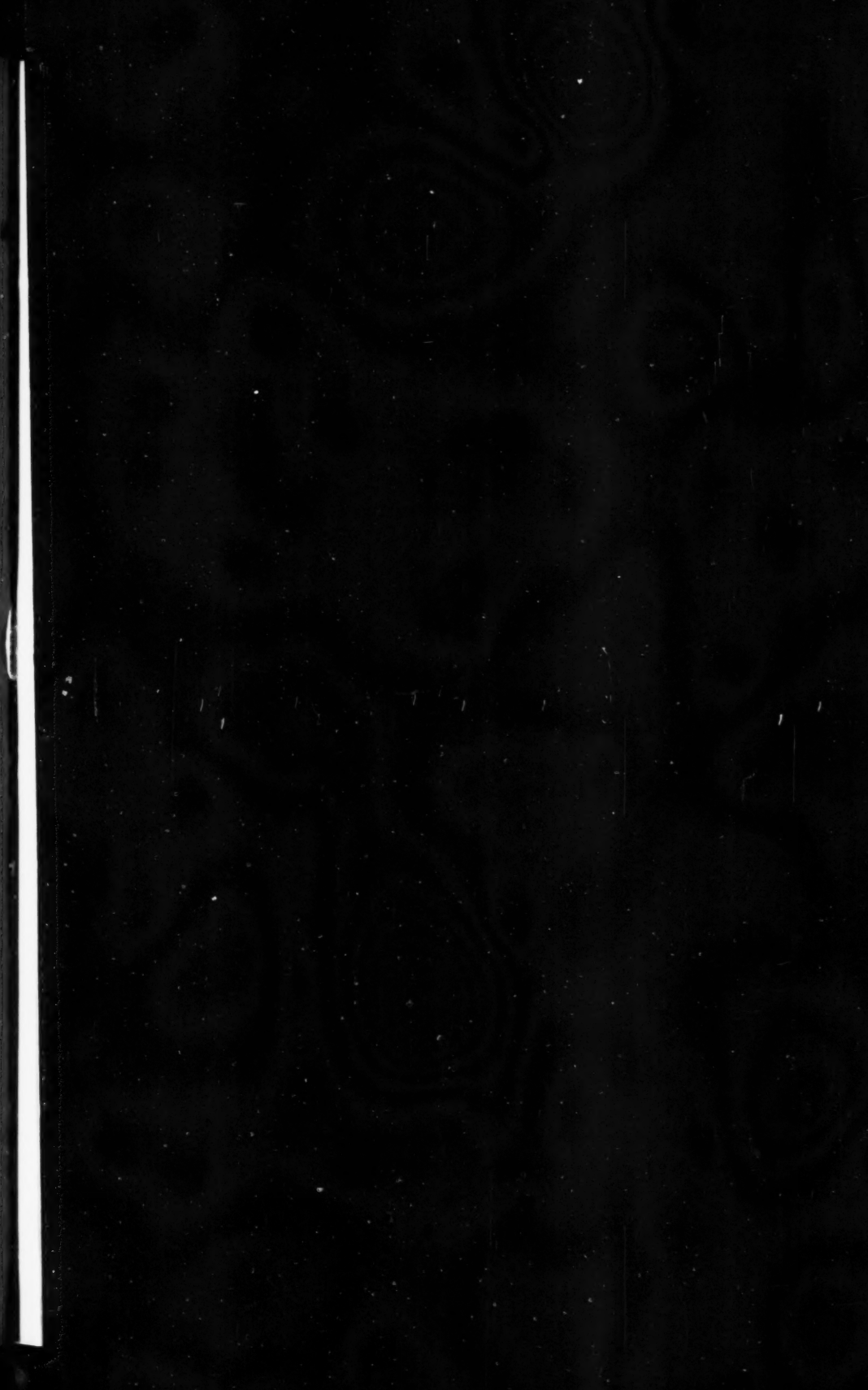
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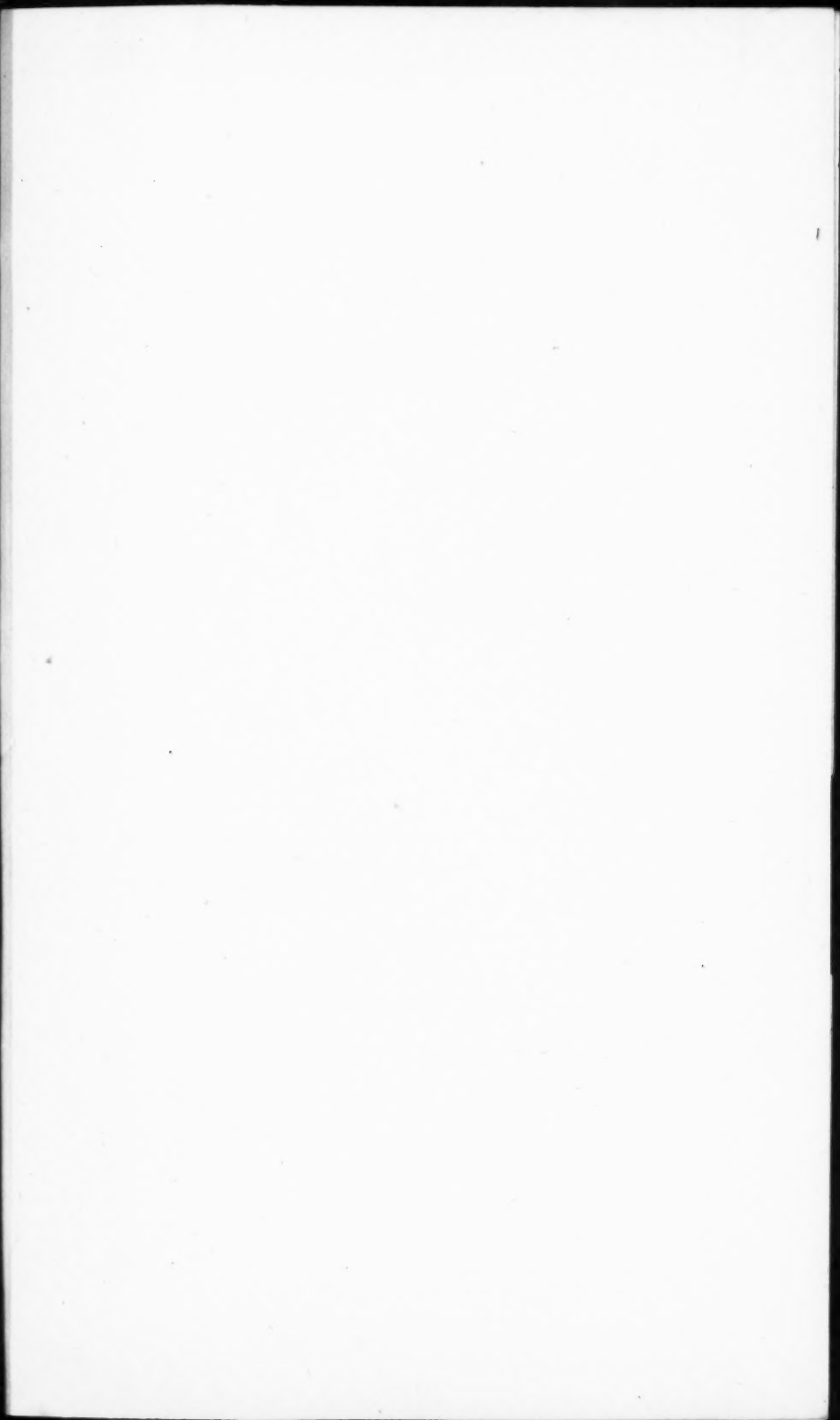
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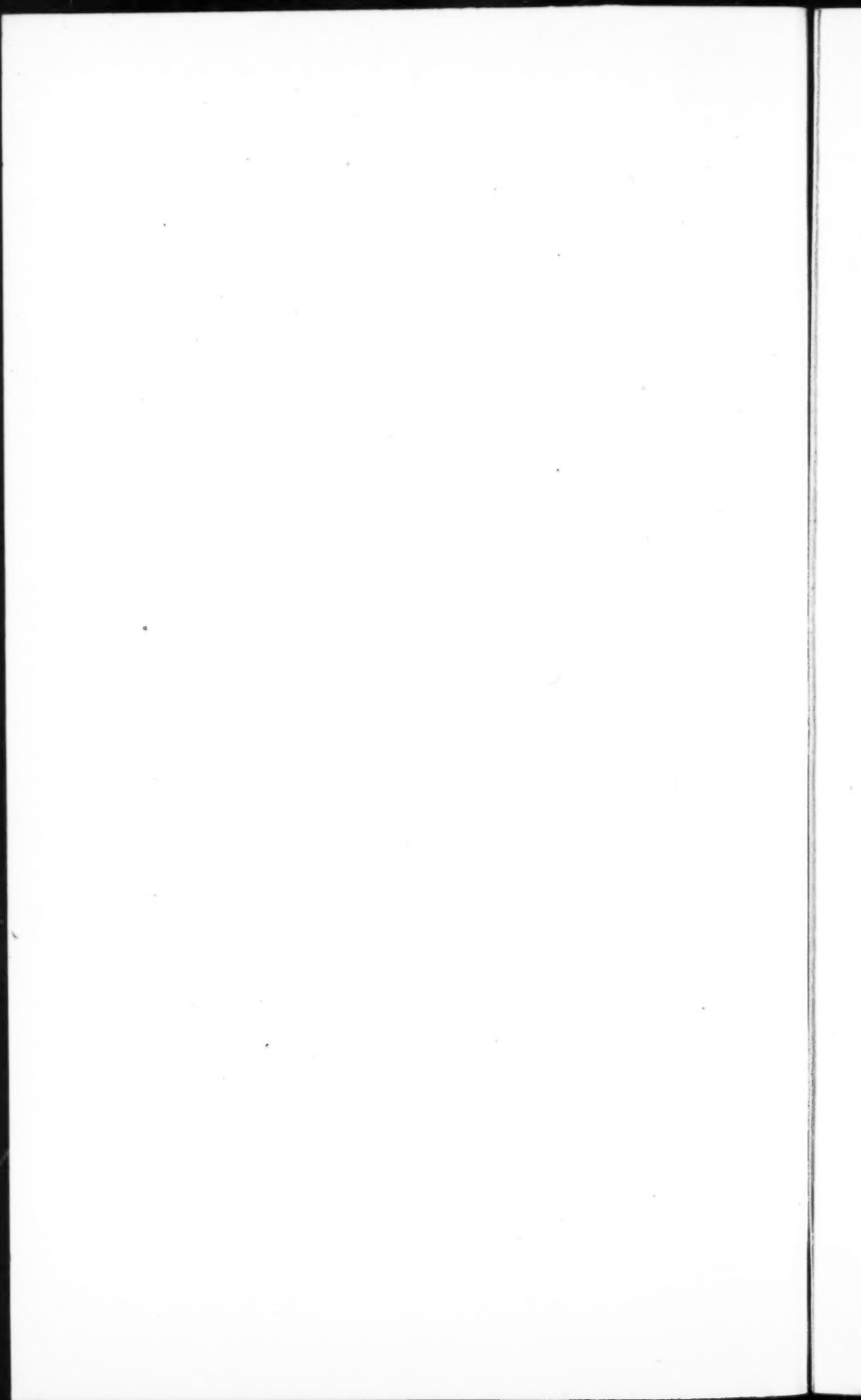
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